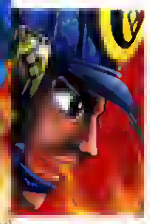
コミック

新田次郎原作

武田信玄

③阿修羅の巻

横山光輝



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武田信玄 3

横山光輝

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甲　美

武田信玄 ③阿修羅の巻

天文十一年（一五四二）、晴信は小県の禰津元直の娘里美を、翌年、神氏諏訪直系の湖衣姫を迎えて、諏訪・佐久・小県をほぼ勢力下においた。さらに、金山師二人と帰参した元奉行衆の今井兵部は、甲州黒川金山五十万両の埋蔵量を推算……又、日向三郎の土産〝鉄砲〟製造の絵図面に、天下統一の夢はふくらみ……

そして、天文十六年、信繁・虎泰・信方を率い、浅間山麓小田井原で上杉憲政の上州軍と死闘を演じ、労咳の熱がなせるのか、志賀城の石垣に生首二千を並べるという阿修羅と化し……

武田家朱印

TAKEDA SHINGEN

武田信玄

VOLUME 3: THE ASURA

BY
YOKOYAMA
MITSUTERU

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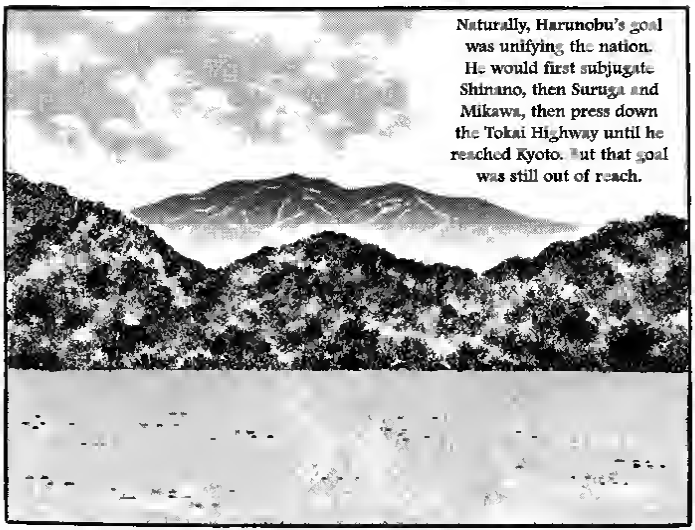
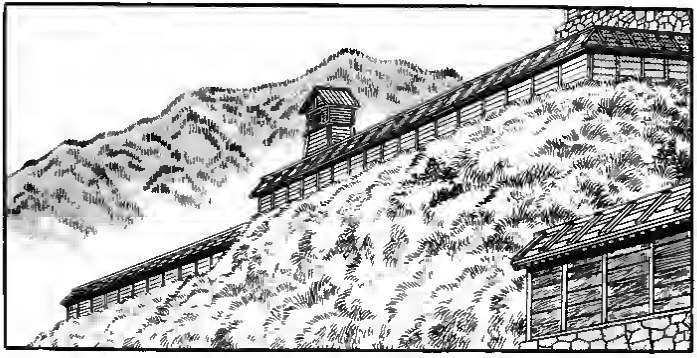
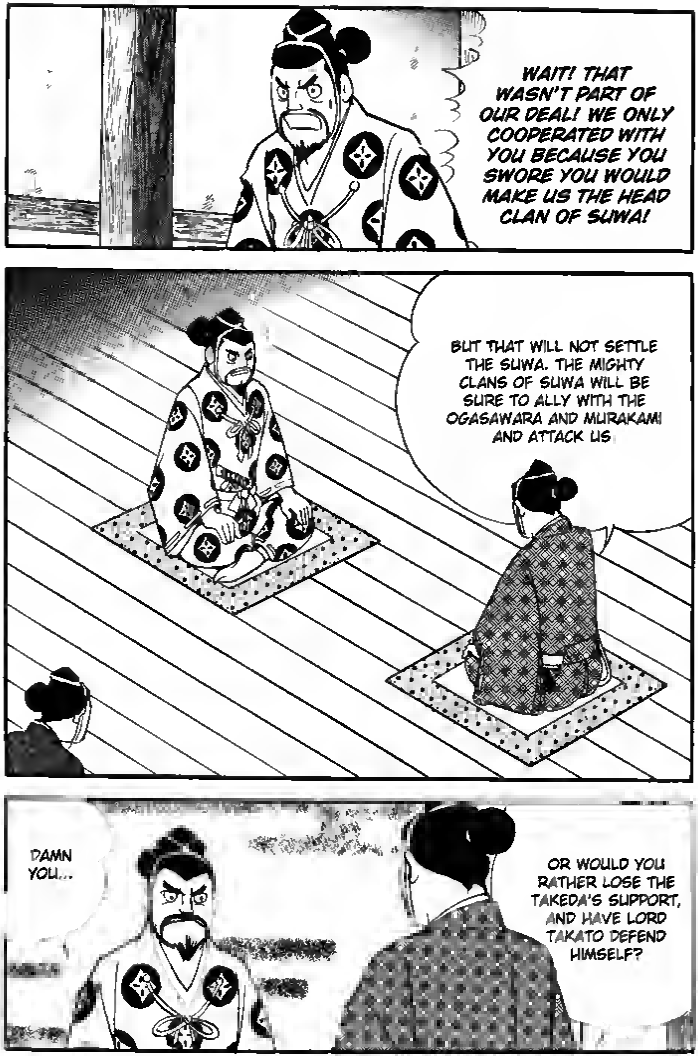
Chapter 19: The Suppression Of Suwa

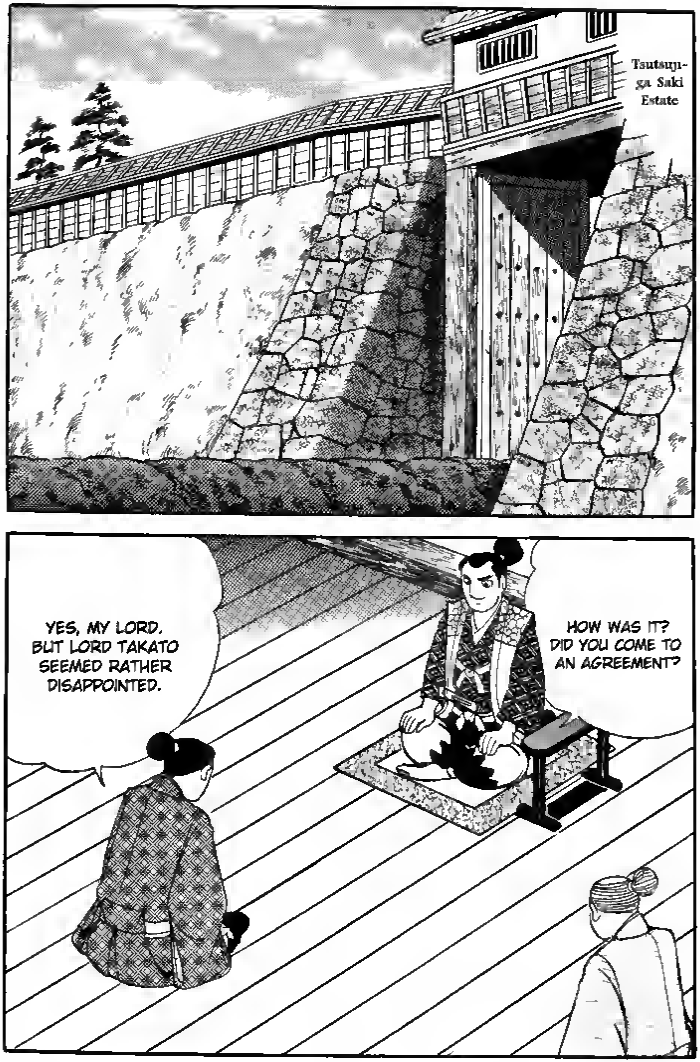

Naturally, Harunobu's goal was unifying the nation. He would first subjugate Shinano, then Suruga and Mikawa, then press down the Tokai Highway until he reached Kyoto. But that goal was still out of reach.



INDEED. THE WEST SHALL BELONG TO LORD TAKATO'S DOMAIN, AND THE EAST SHALL BE UNDER THE TAKEDA'S DOMAIN. THAT SHOULD BE MORE THAN FAIR
WHAT? YOU WISH TO DIVIDE SUWA'S DOMAIN IN TWO, WITH THE MIYA RIVER AS THE BORDER!?

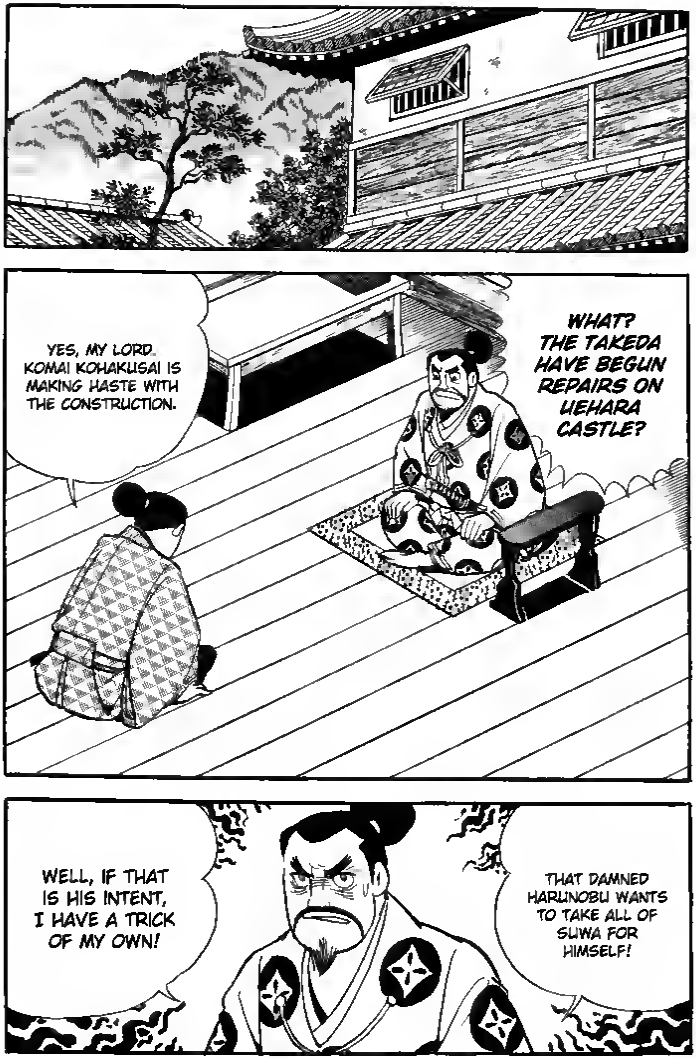

WAIT! THAT WASN'T PART OF OUR DEAL! WE ONLY COOPERATED WITH YOU BECAUSE YOU SWORE YOU WOULD MAKE US THE HEAD CLAN OF SUWA!
BUT THAT WILL NOT SETTLE THE SUWA. THE MIGHTY CLANS OF SUWA WILL BE SURE TO ALLY WITH THE OGASAWARA AND MURAKAMI AND ATTACK US
DAMN YOU...
OR WOULD YOU RATHER LOSE THE TAKEDA'S SUPPORT, AND HAVE LORD TAKATO DEFEND HIMSELF?

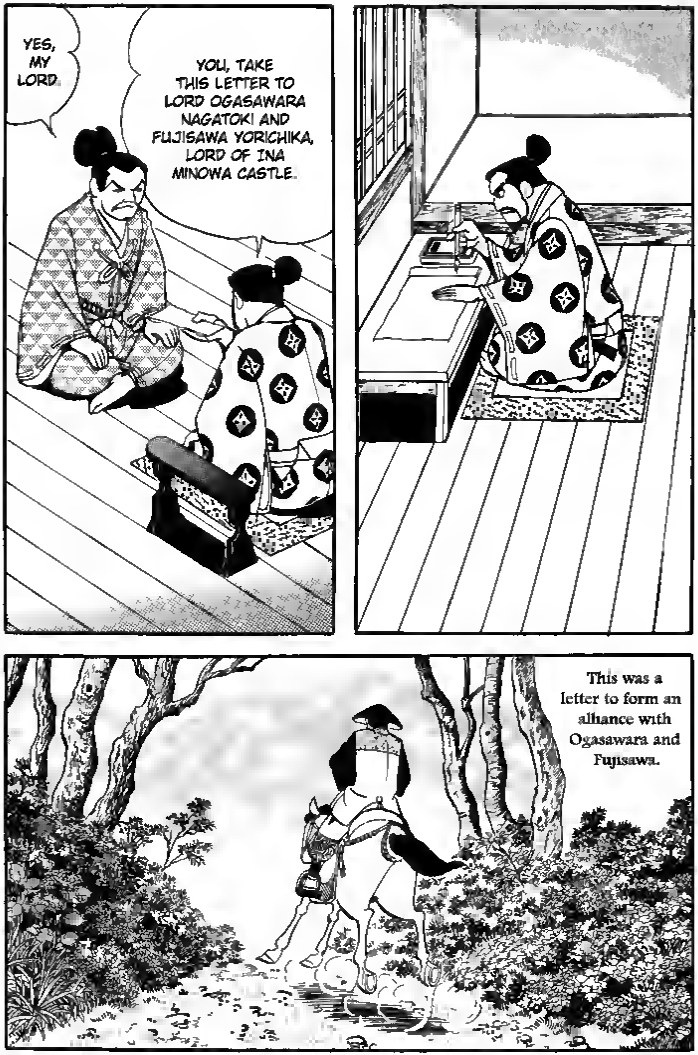
MMMMGH
...
IS IT NOT A WISER CHOICE TO SPLIT THE DOMAIN, AND WE EACH GUARD OUR OWN TERRITORY?
FINE!
THEN WE SHALL DIVIDE THE LAND AT THE MIYA RIVER. THE WEST SHALL BE TAKATO'S DOMAIN, AND THE EAST TAKEDA'S.

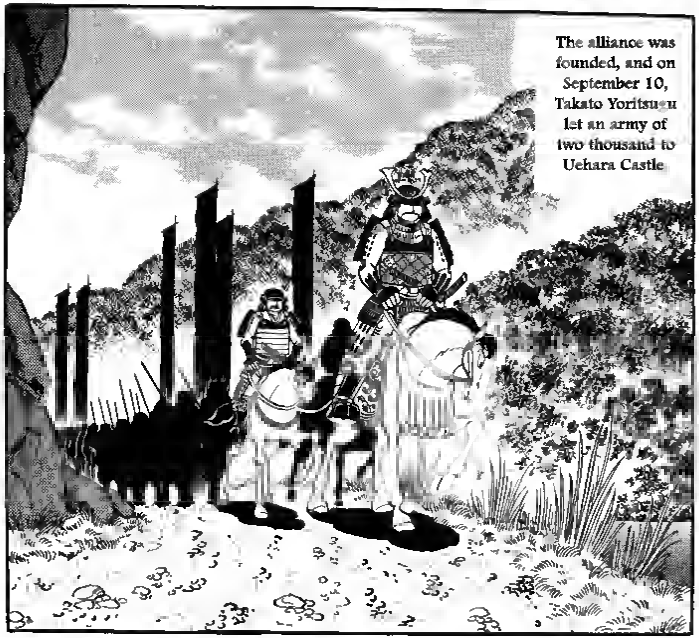

Tsutsuji-ga Saki Estate
HOW WAS IT? DID YOU COME TO AN AGREEMENT?
YES, MY LORD. BUT LORD TAKATO SEEMED RATHER DISAPPOINTED.

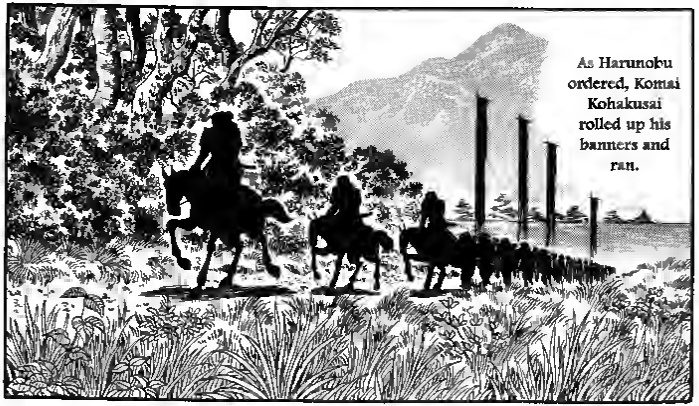
HEHEHE... THAT GREEDY BASTARD.
KOHA-KUSAI.
YES, MY LORD?
I WANT YOU TO GO TO SUWA AND BEGIN REPAIRS ON THE BURNT-DOWN UEHARA CASTLE.
BUT TAKATO WILL ASSAULT BEFORE THE REPAIRS ARE OVER.

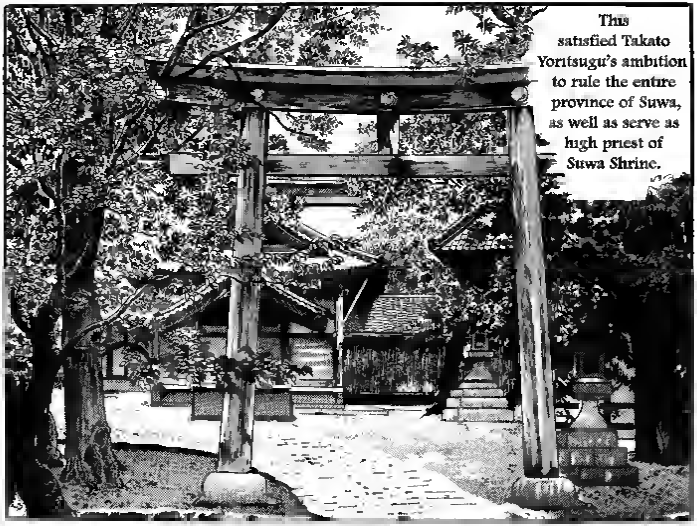
YES, MY LORD.
WHEN THAT HAPPENS, WITHDRAW YOUR FORCES WITHOUT A FIGHT, AND HAVE TAKATO'S SOLDIERS OVERRUN SUWA. ONLY WHEN TAKATO'S AMBITION HAS STRETCHED AS FAR AS IT CAN DO WE DEPOSE HIM
THAT MAN IS SIMPLY GREEDY AND TRULY DOES NOT KNOW HIS PLACE. HE WILL ATTEMPT TO SET HIMSELF UP AS THE CHIEF OF THE SUWA.
Komai Kohakusai hurried to Uehara Castle.


WHAT? THE TAKEDA HAVE BEGUN REPAIRS ON UEHARA CASTLE?
YES, MY LORD. KOMAI KOHAKUSAI IS MAKING HASTE WITH THE CONSTRUCTION.
THAT DAMNED HARUNOBU WANTS TO TAKE ALL OF SUWA FOR HIMSELF!
WELL, IF THAT IS HIS INTENT, I HAVE A TRICK OF MY OWN!


YES, MY LORD.
YOU, TAKE THIS LETTER TO LORD OGASAWARA NAGATOKI AND FUJISAWA YORICHIKA, LORD OF INA MINOWA CASTLE.
This was a letter to form an alliance with Ogasawara and Fujisawa.


The alliance was founded, and on September 10, Takato Yoritsugu let an army of two thousand to Uehara Castle


As Harunobu ordered, Komai Kohakusai rolled up his banners and ran.

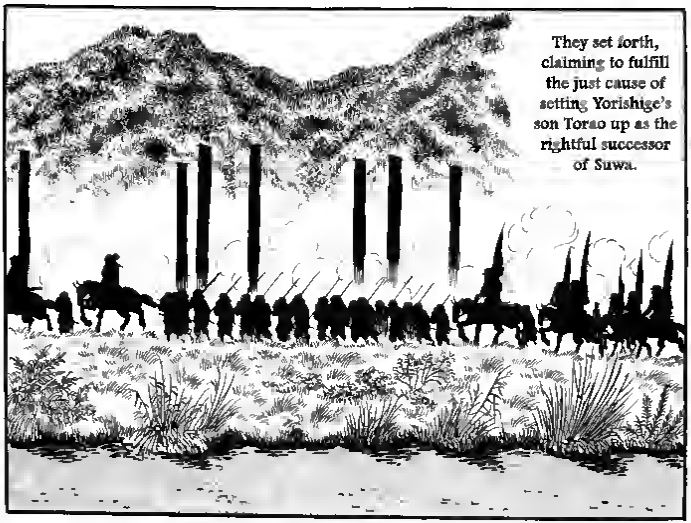

This satisfied Takato Yoritsugu's ambition to rule the entire province of Suwa, as well as serve as high priest of Suwa Shrine.

Yoritsugu then assaulted Kanasashi Takanobu of Lower Suwa,

And pursued him,

And added the Suwa Lower Shrine to his power

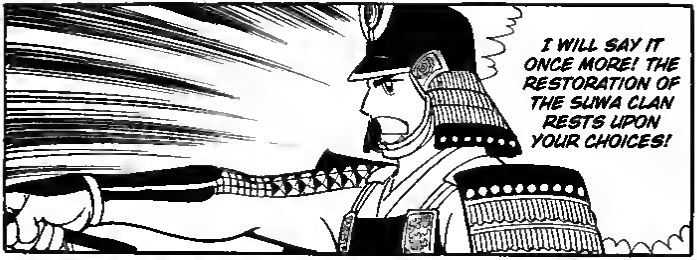
南無諏方南宮法性上
南無諏方南宮法性
As if they were waiting for this, the Takeda army sprung to action.


They set forth, claiming to fulfill the just cause of setting Yorishige's son Torao up as the rightful successor of Suwa.

Upon hearing this, the mighty clans of Suwa

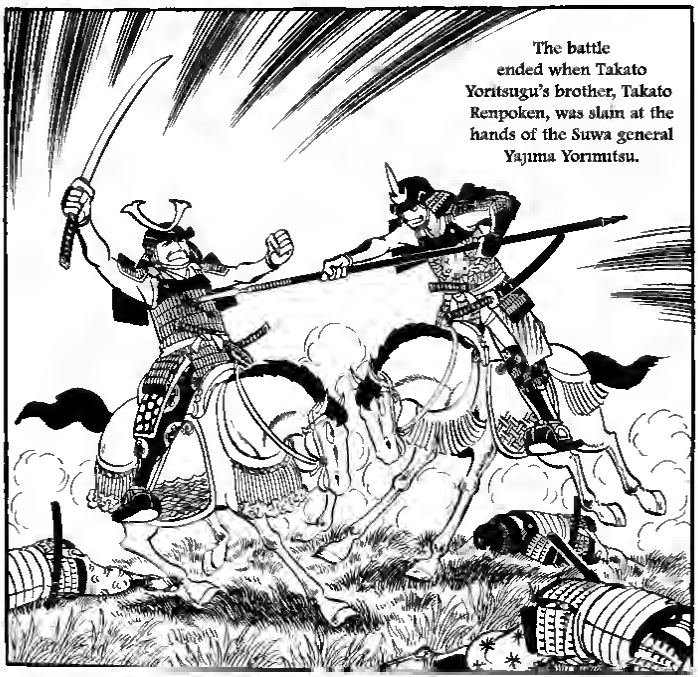
began assembling under Takeda's banner, one by one.

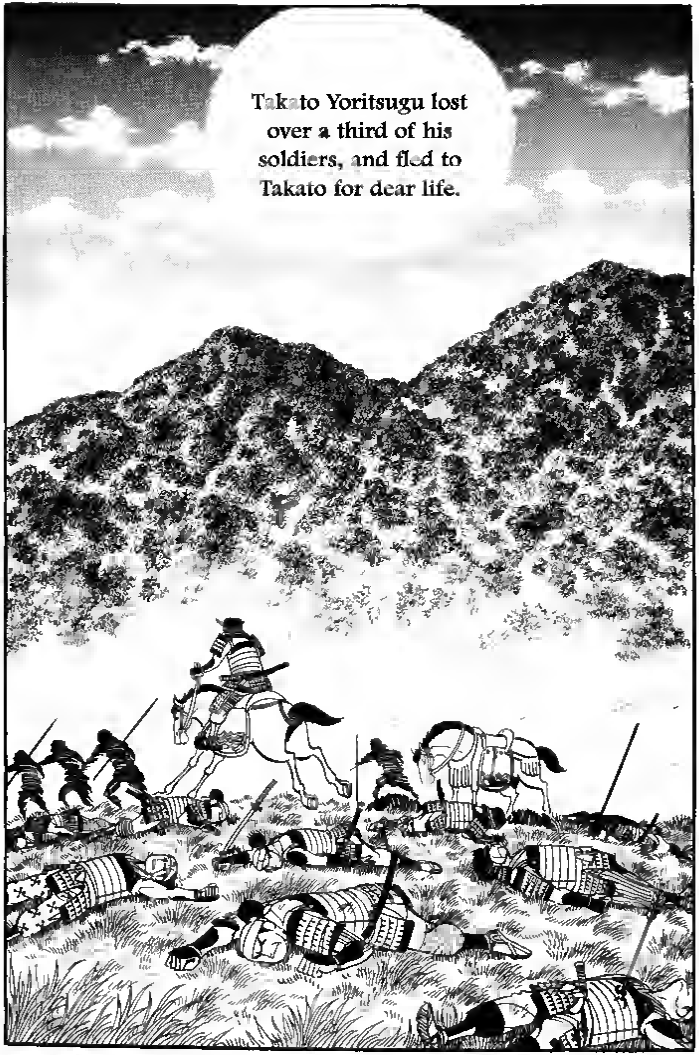
WILL YOU LET THE HEADSHIP GO TO THE TAKATO CLAN THAT BROKE OFF FROM THE SUWA CLAN TEN GENERATIONS AGO? OR WILL YOU SET UP LORD YORISHIGE'S SON AS HIS SUCCESSOR!? LORD YORISHIGE'S DOWNFALL WAS NOT ONLY HIS RESPONSIBILITY! YOU WHO ABANDONED LORD YORISHIGE ARE ACCOUNTABLE AS WELL!
HEAR ME! THE RESTORATION OF THE SUWA CLAN RESTS UPON YOUR CHOICES!


I WILL SAY IT ONCE MORE! THE RESTORATION OF THE SUWA CLAN RESTS UPON YOUR CHOICES!

The Suwa Clan scrambled to lead the charge.

The fighting lasted until dusk.


The battle ended when Takato Yoritsugu's brother, Takato Renpoken, was slain at the hands of the Suwa general Yajima Yorimitsu.

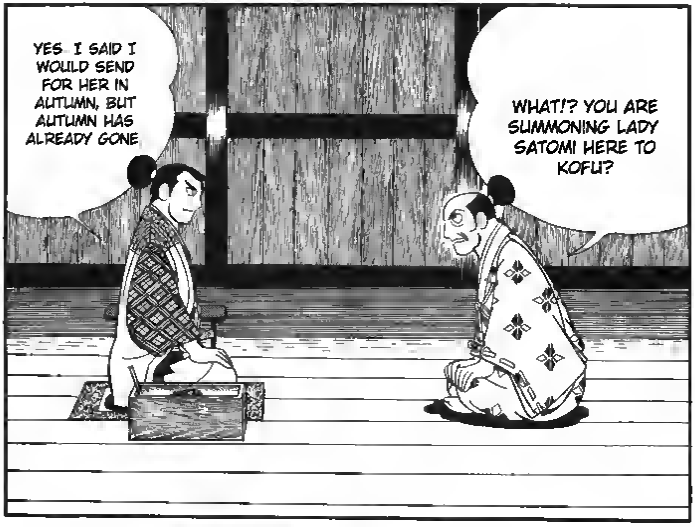

Takato Yoritsugu lost
over a third of his
soldiers, and fled to
Takato for dear life.

TAKEDA SHINGEN

TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

CHAPTER 19

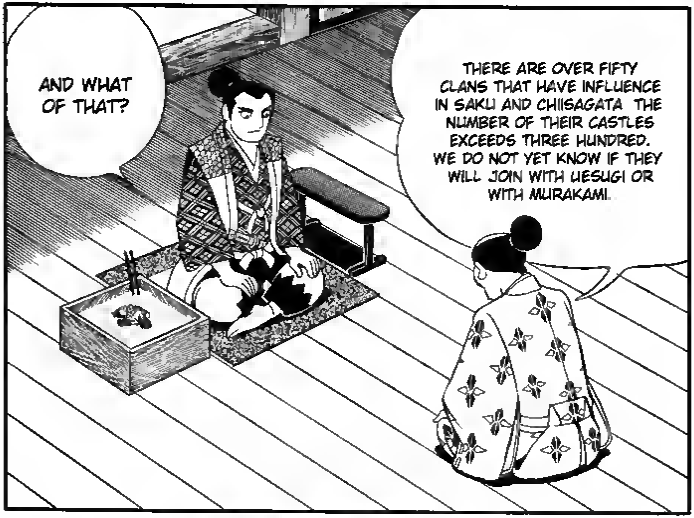
Chapter 20: Break Through Enemy Lines


YES. I SAID I WOULD SEND FOR HER IN AUTUMN, BUT AUTUMN HAS ALREADY GONE
WHAT!? YOU ARE SUMMONING LADY SATOMI HERE TO KOFU?

WHY DO YOU NOT HOLD OFF A LITTLE LONGER?
BUT WHAT?

I HAVE HEARD THAT THE LADY SATOMI IS QUITE A TALENTED WOMAN, AND I HAVE NO OBJECTIONS TO YOU SENDING FOR HER.. BUT..

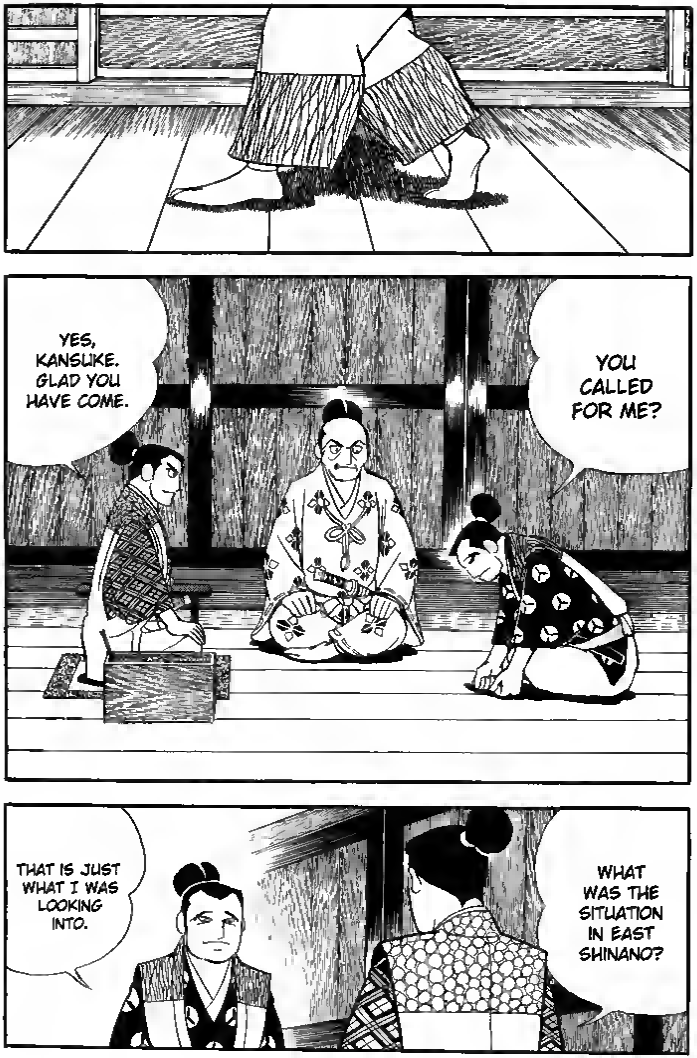
SUWA MAY HAVE CALMED, BUT THE FIGHTING IN INA HAS NOT YET SUBSIDED. ALSO...
WHY?


AND WHAT OF THAT?
THERE ARE OVER FIFTY CLANS THAT HAVE INFLUENCE IN SAKU AND CHIISAGATA. THE NUMBER OF THEIR CASTLES EXCEEDS THREE HUNDRED. WE DO NOT YET KNOW IF THEY WILL JOIN WITH UESUGI OR WITH MURAKAMI.

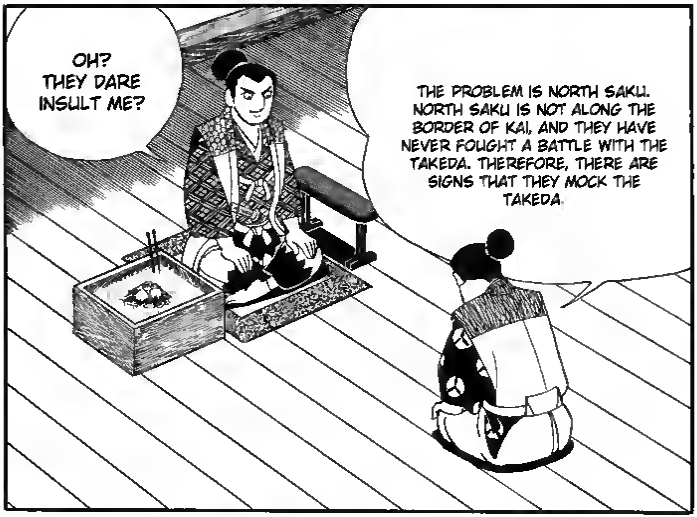
NOT ONLY THE NEIGHBORING CLANS. IT WILL PROVOKE THE UESUGI, THE MURAKAMI, AND THE OGASAWARA AS WELL.
SENDING FOR LADY SATOMI FROM THE NEZU CLAN NOW WILL DRIVE THE TAKEDA'S LINCHPIN INTO EAST SHINANO. THAT IS SURE TO PROVOKE THE NEIGHBORING CLANS.

I SEE. THAT IS A CAREFUL WAY OF THINKING.
I BELIEVE WE MUST WAIT UNTIL LIPPER INA IS TAKEN CARE OF
THEN WAR WILL START ONCE AGAIN.
AND WHAT IF I SEND FOR LADY SATOMI ANYWAY?
I CANNOT CLAIM TO CONQUER THE NATION IF I CANNOT SUPPRESS SHINANO. AND I AM MOST CERTAINLY NOT AFRAID OF THE MURAKAMI OR THE OGASAWARA.
BESIDES, I WANT LADY SATOMI, AND LADY SATOMI TOLD ME THAT SHE WANTED TO BE WITH ME BY AUTUMN.

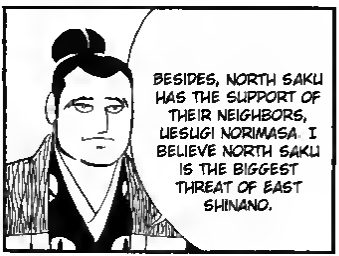
HERE IS LADY SATOMI'S LETTER. . READ IT, IF YOU WILL
MY DEEPEST APOLOGIES. IF LADY SATOMI HAS GIVEN HER CONSENT, THAT MUST MEAN THE NEZU CLAN DOES NOT OBJECT
BUT YOU CANNOT SEND FOR HER WITHOUT BREAKING THROUGH ENEMY LINES. AND THE NUMBER OF ESCORTS YOU WOULD NEED...
UNDERSTOOD.


YES, KANSUKE. GLAD YOU HAVE COME.
YOU CALLED FOR ME?
THAT IS JUST WHAT I WAS LOOKING INTO.
WHAT WAS THE SITUATION IN EAST SHINANO?

NOW THAT THE SUWA HAVE BEEN DISABLED AND CHIISAGATA HAS BECOME TAKEDA'S TERRITORY, THERE IS NO NEED TO STRESS ABOUT THEM EITHER, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF OI SADATAKA, LORD OF NAGAKUBO CASTLE.
THE CLANS OF SOUTH SAKU ARE ON THE BORDER WITH KAI, SO IT IS SAFE TO ASSUME THAT NONE OF THEM INTEND TO REBEL AGAINST THE TAKEDA.

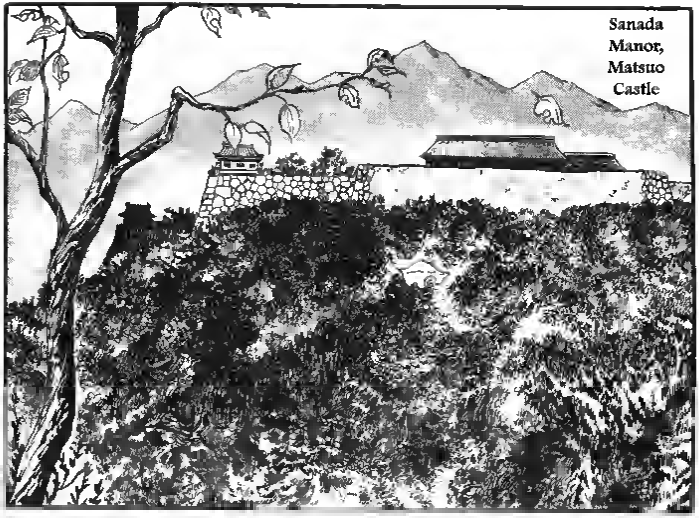

OH? THEY DARE INSULT ME?
THE PROBLEM IS NORTH SAKU. NORTH SAKU IS NOT ALONG THE BORDER OF KAI, AND THEY HAVE NEVER FOUGHT A BATTLE WITH THE TAKEDA. THEREFORE, THERE ARE SIGNS THAT THEY MOCK THE TAKEDA.

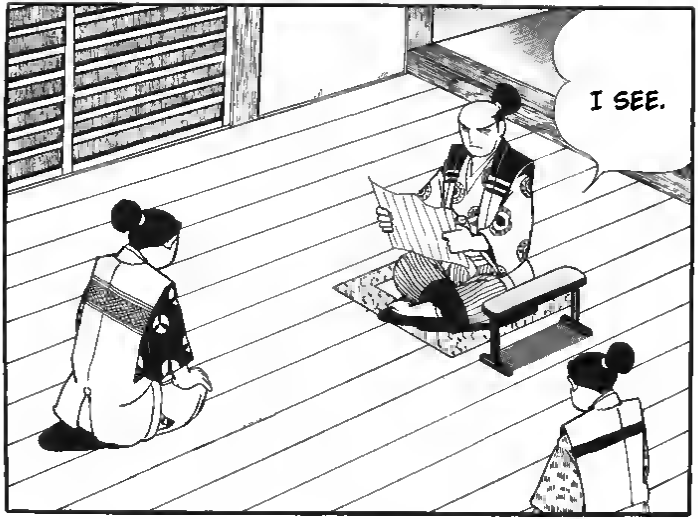
I SEE.


BESIDES, NORTH SAKU HAS THE SUPPORT OF THEIR NEIGHBORS, UESUGI NORIMASA. I BELIEVE NORTH SAKU IS THE BIGGEST THREAT OF EAST SHINANO.

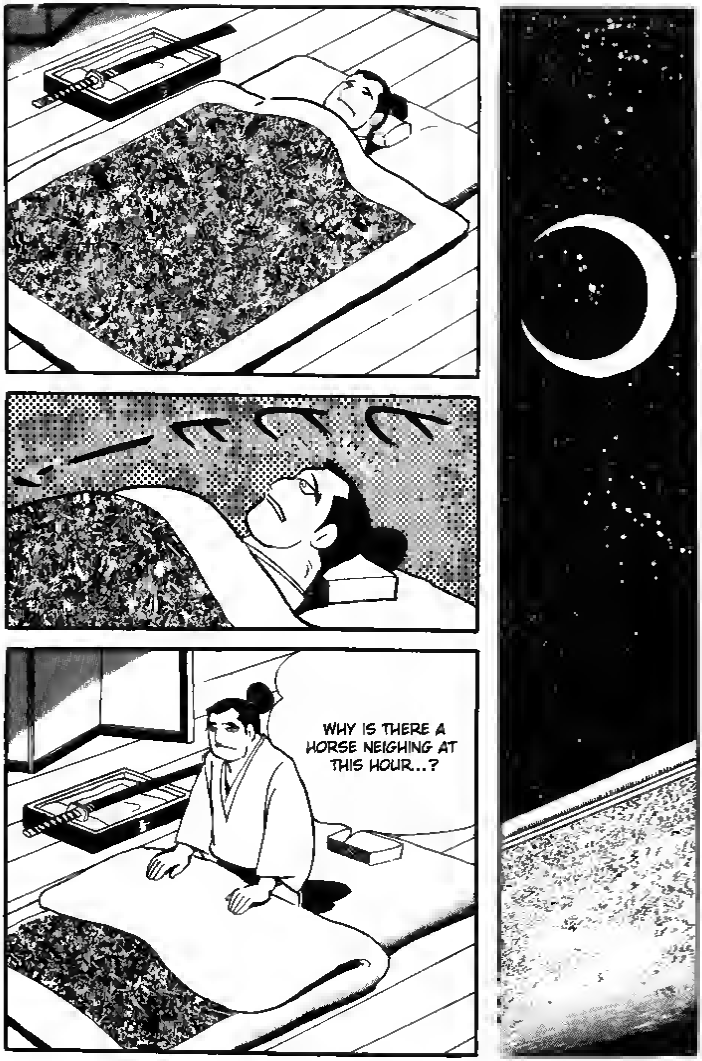
YOU ASKED ME TO SEARCH THROUGH CHIISAGATA, NORTH SAKU, AND SOUTH SAKU FOR SOMEONE SENSIBLE, BUT IT WAS TRULY DIFFICULT...
SO HAVE YOU SELECTED ANYONE?
YOU MET HIM?
NO, I BELIEVE THE LORD OF MATSUO CASTLE, SANADA YUKITAKA OF THE SANADA MANOR OF CHIISAGATA, IS SUITABLE...
YOU ARE SAYING YOU FOUND NO ONE?
THEN HOW CAN YOU KNOW THAT HE IS SUITABLE?
NO.

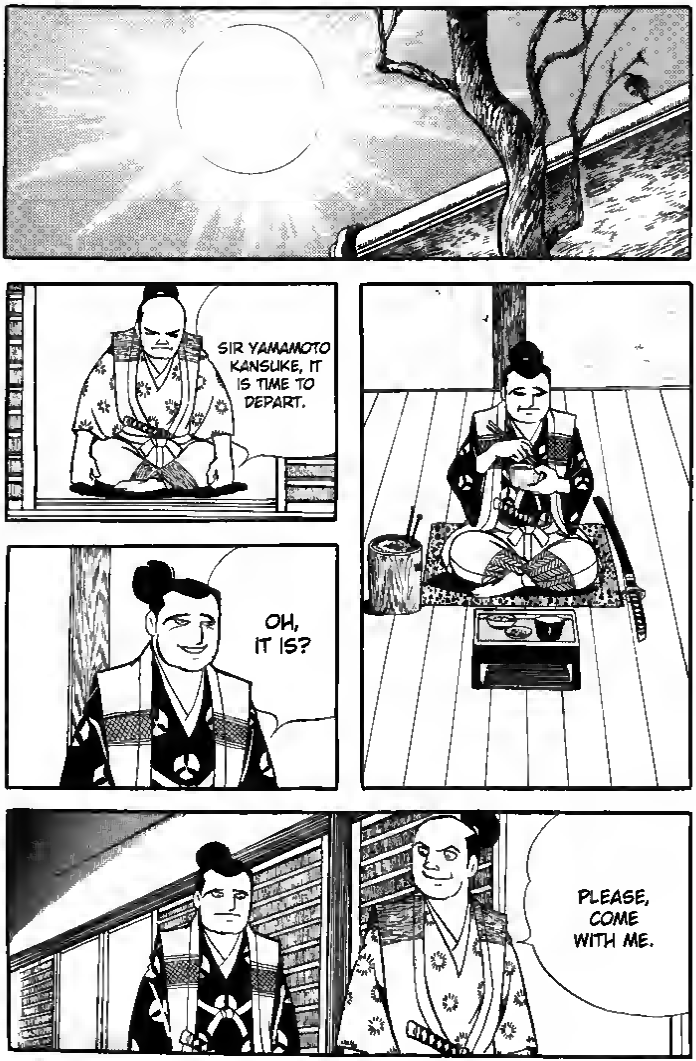
OH? LADY SATOMI RECOMMENDED HIM?
BECAUSE LADY SATOMI RECOMMENDED HIM
IS THAT NOT TOO ERRATIC?
IT IS NOT ERRATIC
THEN THERE IS NO ISSUE I SHALL ORDER THIS SANADA YUKITAKA TO ESCORT LADY SATOMI TO KOFU.
IF I WENT FROM KOFU TO ESCORT HER, THE JOURNEY WOULD BE DIFFICULT, AND THERE WOULD BE A CRISIS IF ANYTHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO LADY SATOMI... IT WOULD BE BETTER TO LEAVE THIS TO SANADA OF SHINANO.

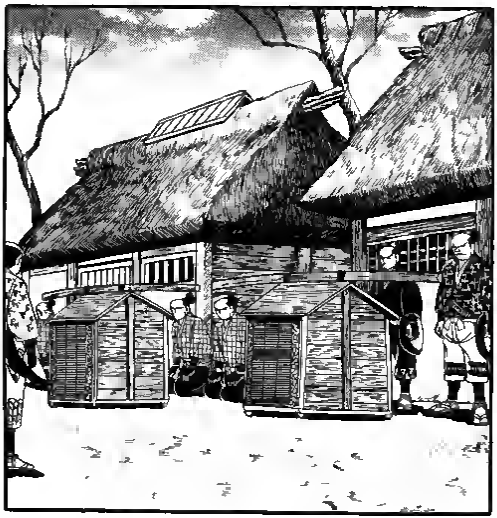

Sanada
Manor,
Matsuo
Castle


I SEE.

THREE DAYS..?
TELL LORD HARUNOBU THAT I ACCEPT. LADY SATOMI WILL MOST LIKELY BE IN KAI TERRITORY WITHIN THREE DAYS.
HOW WILL HE TRAVERSE THROUGH ENEMY TERRITORY IN THREE DAYS...? I WISH I COULD WITNESS THIS!
YES. THREE DAYS.
YOU MAY REST HERE AT MY CASTLE TONIGHT.
YES, SIR!
WOULD IT CAUSE INCONVENIENCE IF I WERE TO ACCOMPANY YOU?
I WILL NOT HINDER YOU IF YOU WISH TO COME ALONG.


WHY IS THERE A HORSE NEIGHING AT THIS HOUR...?


SIR YAMAMOTO KANSUKE, IT IS TIME TO DEPART.
OH, IT IS?
PLEASE, COME WITH ME.



ИИИ?

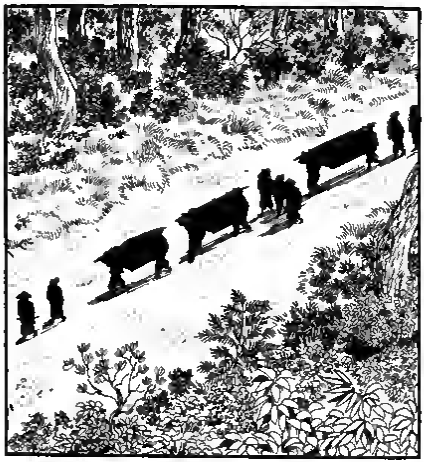
WELL, IF IT ISN'T SIR SANADA YUKITAKA!

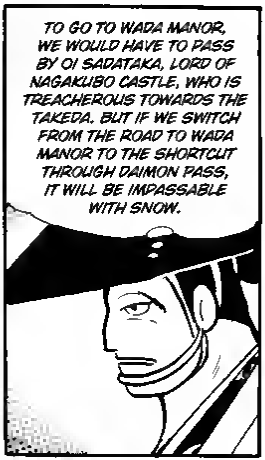
YAMAMOTO KANBEI...?
THIS IS THE PALANQUIN FOR THE DAUGHTER OF SIR YAMAMOTO SABUROBE, RETAINER OF THE SANADA MANOR, TO BE WED TO SIR OGIWARA SENDAI OF WADA MANOR. SIR YAMAMOTO KANBEI, I ENTRUST YOU WITH THE CHARGE OF LEADING THE ESCORT.

SIR YAMAMOTO IS HERE! WE MARCH NOW...
SO DID THE HORSE NEIGHING LAST NIGHT MEAN ..
HMM... IS LADY SATOMI REALLY RIDING THIS PALANQUIN...?

THIS IS AMUSING. WE SHALL WITNESS WHAT KIND OF MAN SANADA YUKITAKA IS.

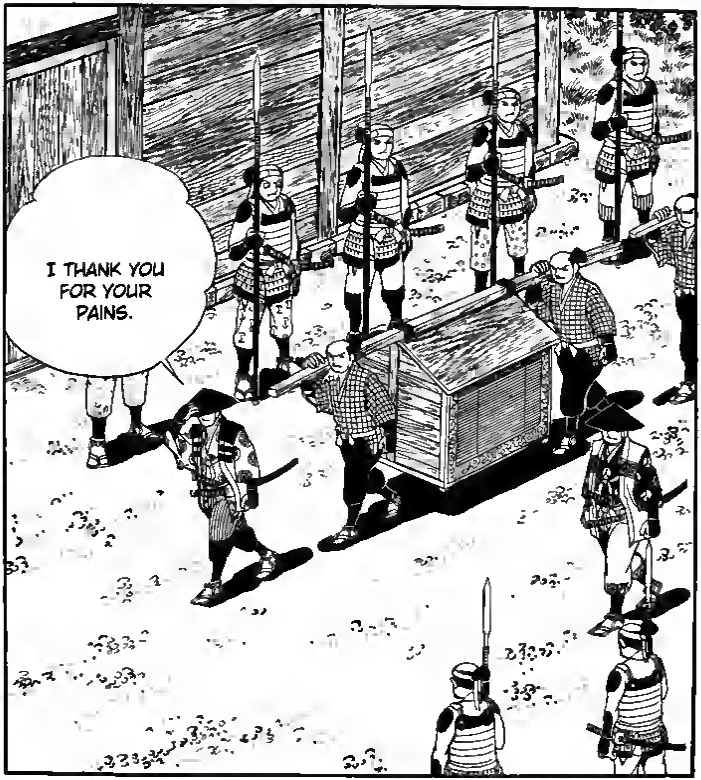
THERE ARE TWO WAYS THAT LEAD TO KAI .. ONE IS THE SAKU HIGHWAY THROUGH WAKAMIKO. THE OTHER IS A SHORTCUT THROUGH DAIMON PASS. BUT BOTH OF THEM GO THROUGH ENEMY TERRITORY.



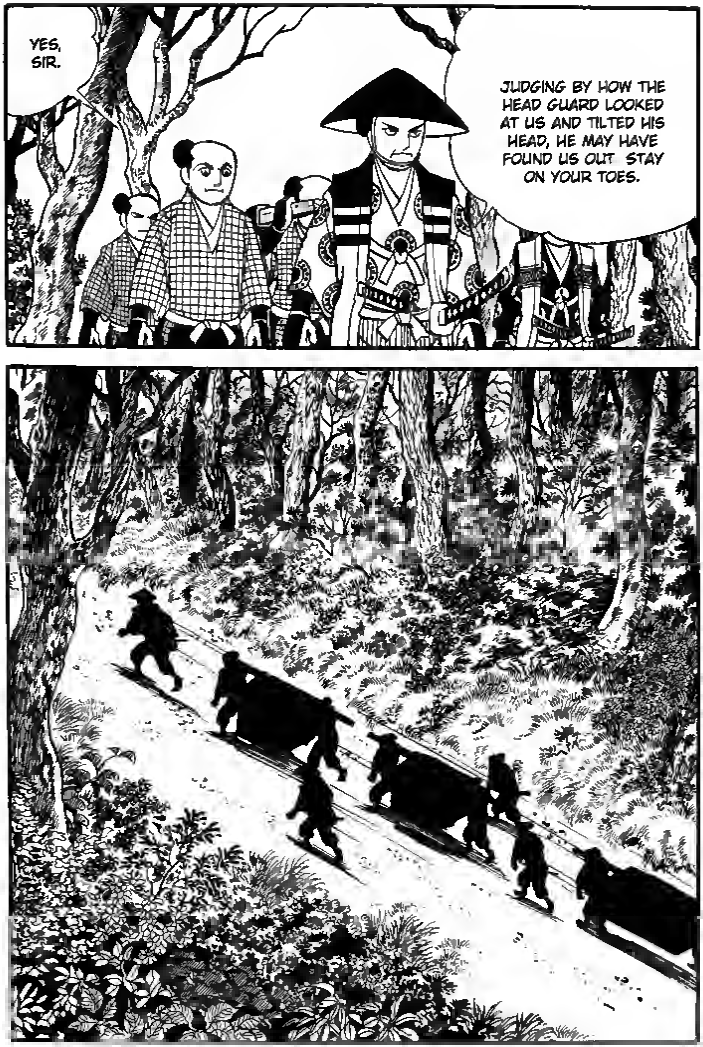

TO GO TO WADA MANOR, WE WOULD HAVE TO PASS BY OI SADATAKA, LORD OF NAGAKUBO CASTLE, WHO IS TREACHEROUS TOWARDS THE TAKEDA. BUT IF WE SWITCH FROM THE ROAD TO WADA MANOR TO THE SHORTCUT THROUGH DAIMON PASS, IT WILL BE IMPASSABLE WITH SNOW.

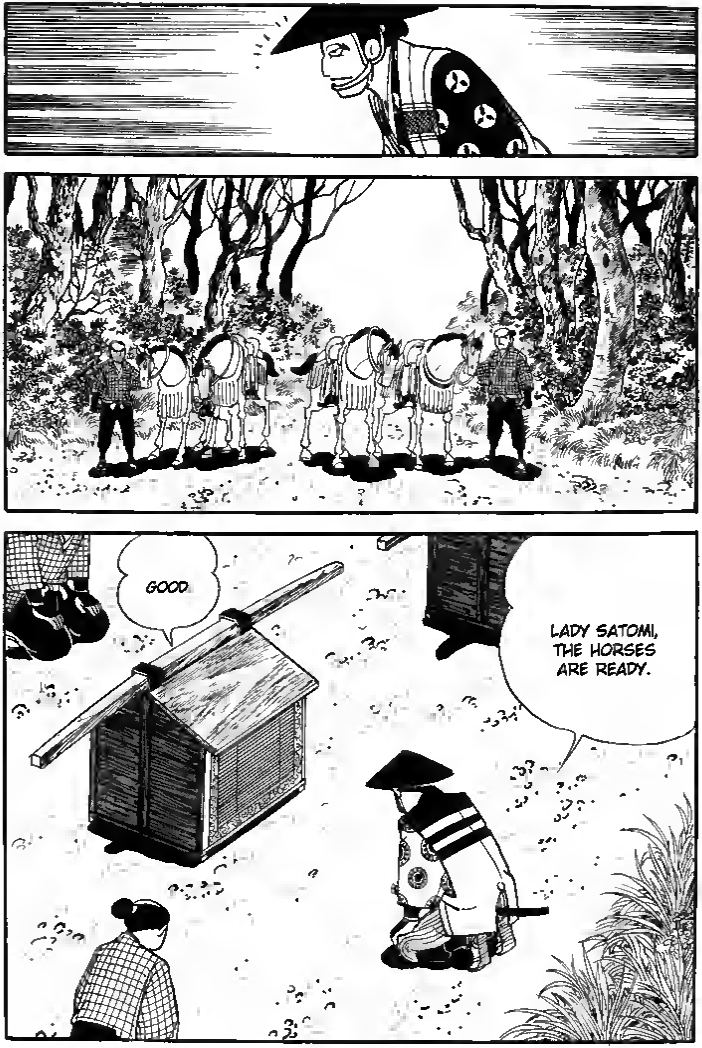
HALT!
THOSE ARE OI SOLDIERS.
WHAT IS THIS PROCESSION FOR!?
THE DAUGHTER OF SIR YAMAMOTO SABUROBE, RETAINER OF THE SANADA MANOR, IS BEING WED TO SIR OGIWARA SENDAI OF WADA MANOR.

OUR DUTY DEMANDS THAT WE CONFIRM THIS IS TRUE
WE HAVE CELEBRATORY WINE HERE. PLEASE, HELP YOURSELVES.
GOOD. YOU MAY PASS
IT'S LADY SATOMI... SO SHE DID COME LAST NIGHT.

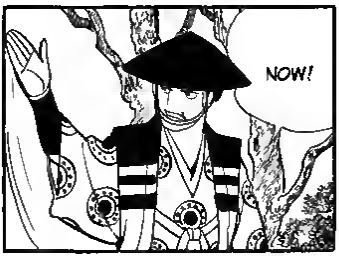

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR PAINS.

THIS SEEMS ODD...


YES, SIR.
JUDGING BY HOW THE HEAD GUARD LOOKED AT US AND TILTED HIS HEAD, HE MAY HAVE FOUND US OUT. STAY ON YOUR TOES.

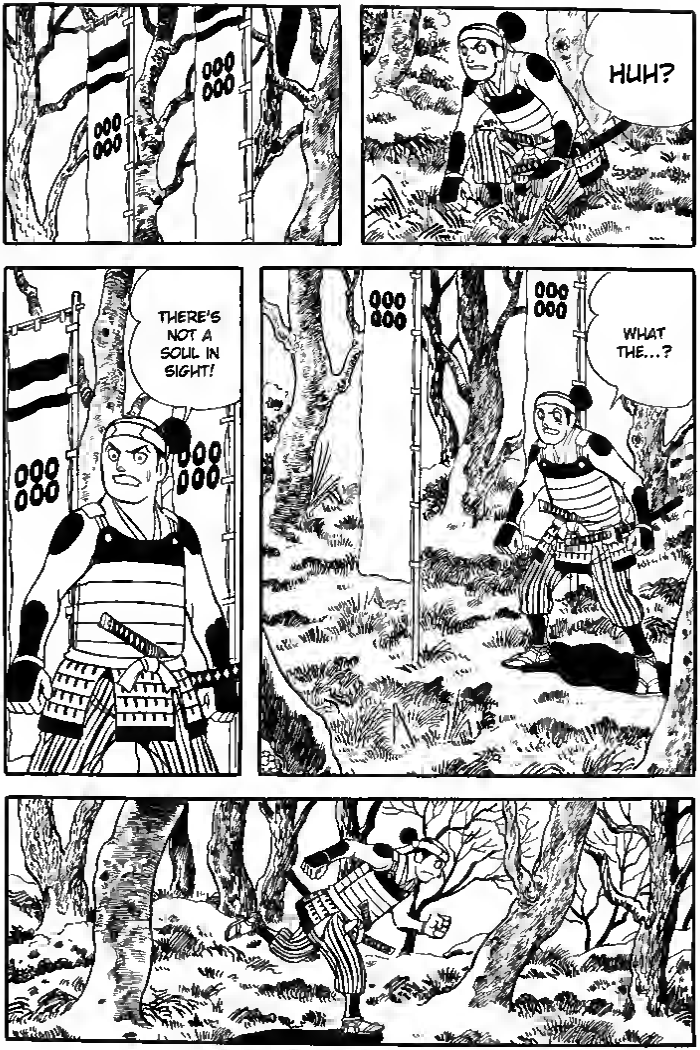

GOOD.
LADY SATOMI, THE HORSES ARE READY.

YES.
TAKE TO THE PASS, MY LADY WE WILL SERVE AS REARGUARD IF IT COMES TO IT

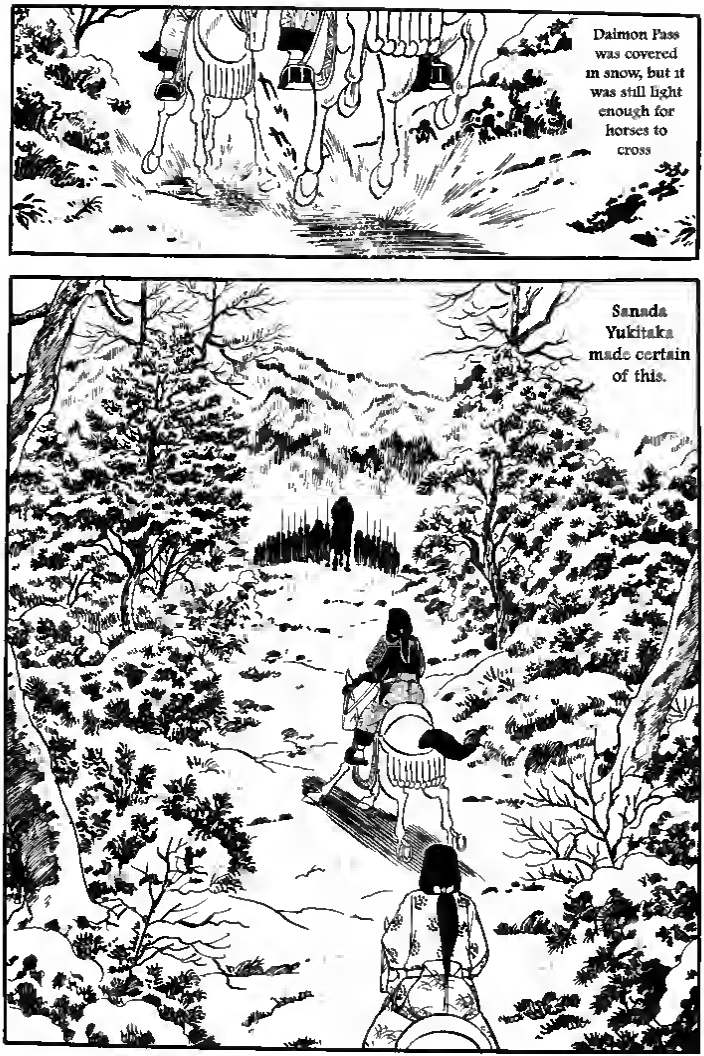

NOW!

SO THEY NOTICED AFTER ALL.
SIR! THEY'RE PURSUING US!
GO!
SEIZE THEM! DON'T LET THEM GET AWAY!

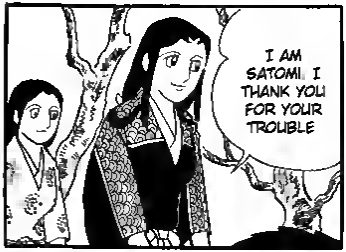
HUH? STOP!
IT'S AN AMBUSH!
YES, SIR!
YOU THERE! GO AHEAD AND SEE HOW MANY THERE ARE!


HUH?
THERE'S NOT A SOUL IN SIGHT!
WHAT THE...?

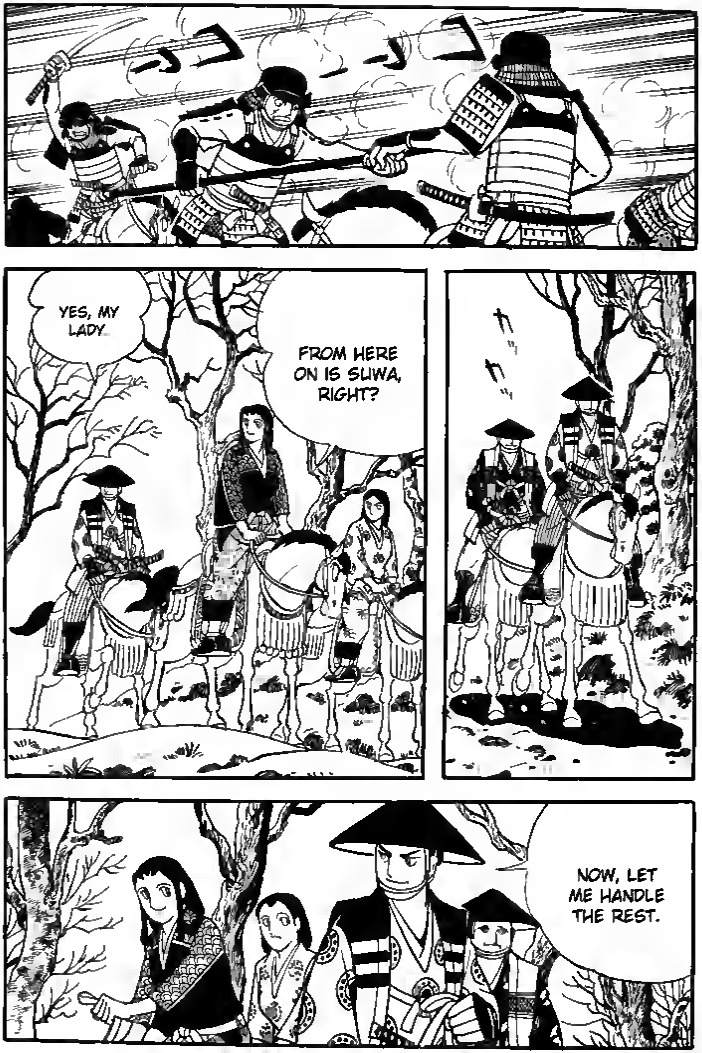
WHAT!?
REPORTING IN! THERE IS NO SIGN OF THE ENEMY! THERE ARE ONLY FLAGS!
NNNGH! AFTER THEM!

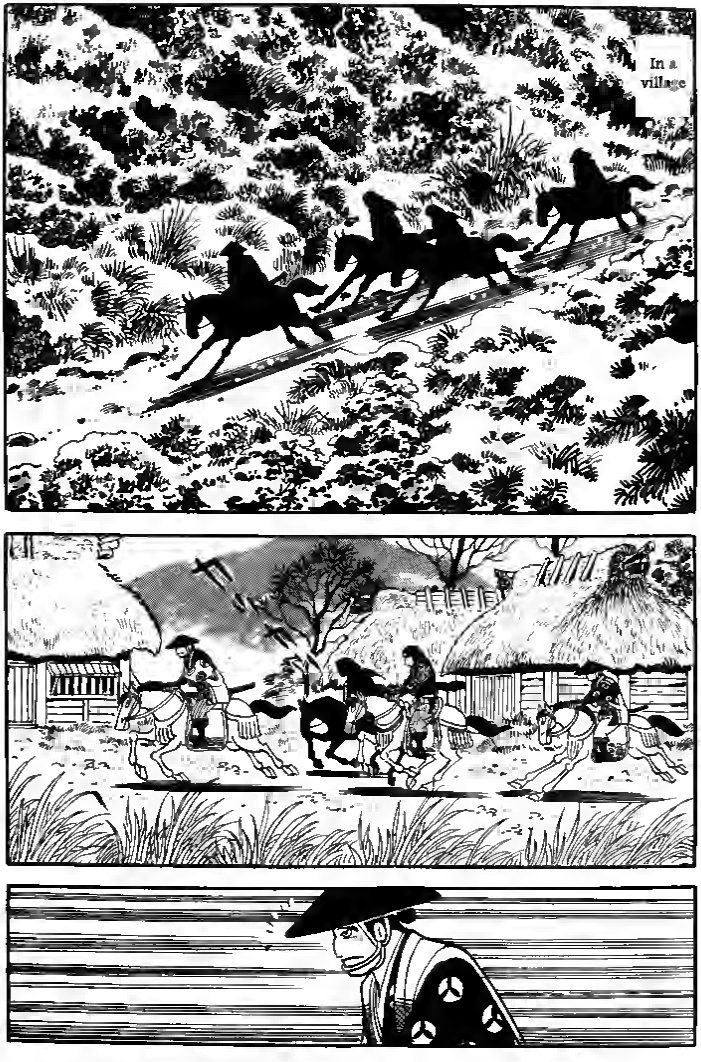

Daimon Pass was covered in snow, but it was still light enough for horses to cross
Sanada Yukitaka made certain of this.

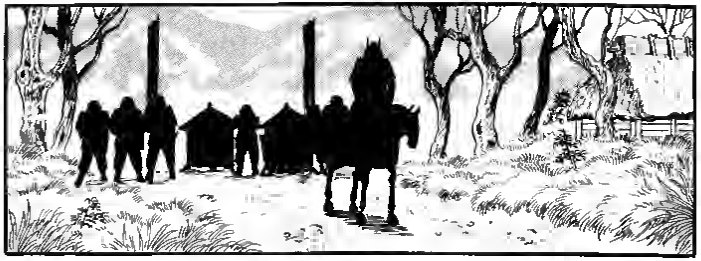
WE ARE HERE TO ESCORT YOU ON OUR LORD'S ORDERS.


I AM SATOMI. I THANK YOU FOR YOUR TROUBLE

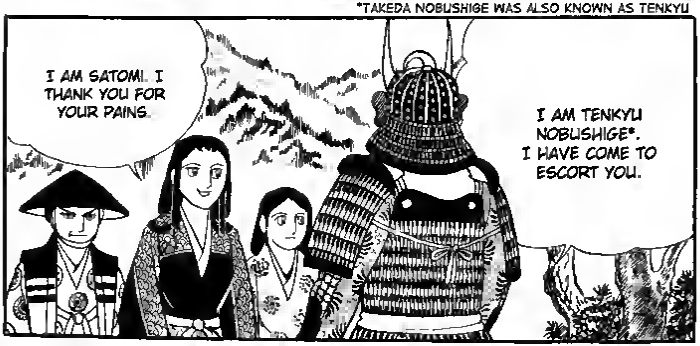
WE WILL HANDLE THE PURSUERS.
GO!

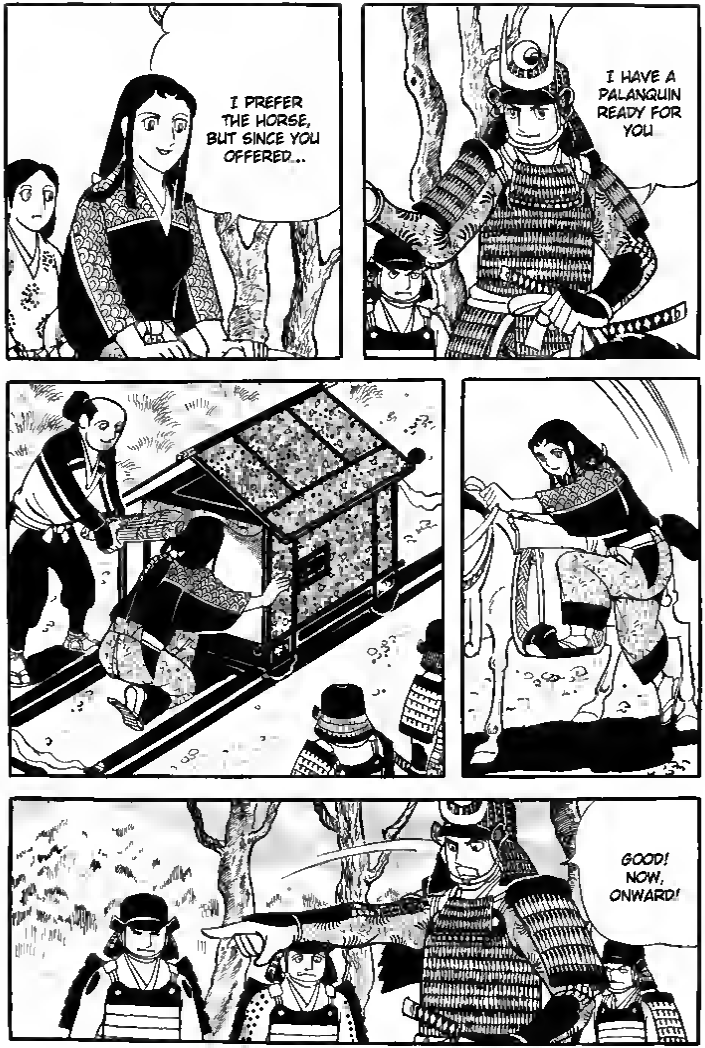

YES, MY LADY.
FROM HERE ON IS SUWA, RIGHT?
カッ カッ
NOW, LET ME HANDLE THE REST.

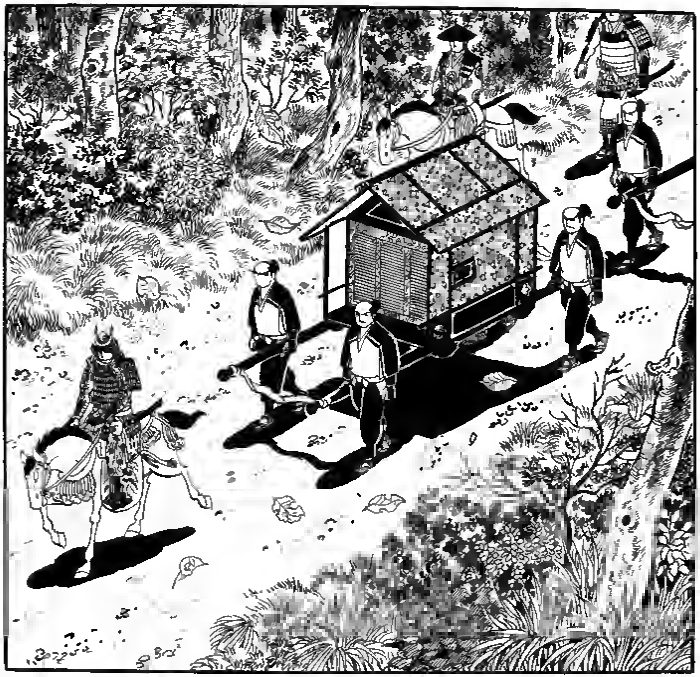

In a village

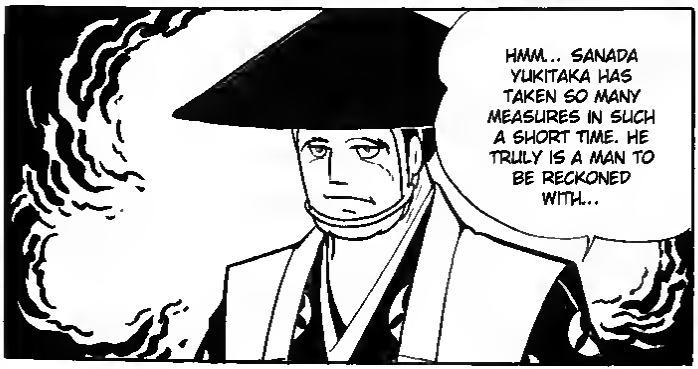


*TAKEDA NOBUSHIGE WAS ALSO KNOWN AS TENKYU




I PREFER THE HORSE, BUT SINCE YOU OFFERED...
I HAVE A PALANQUIN READY FOR YOU
GOOD! NOW, ONWARD!



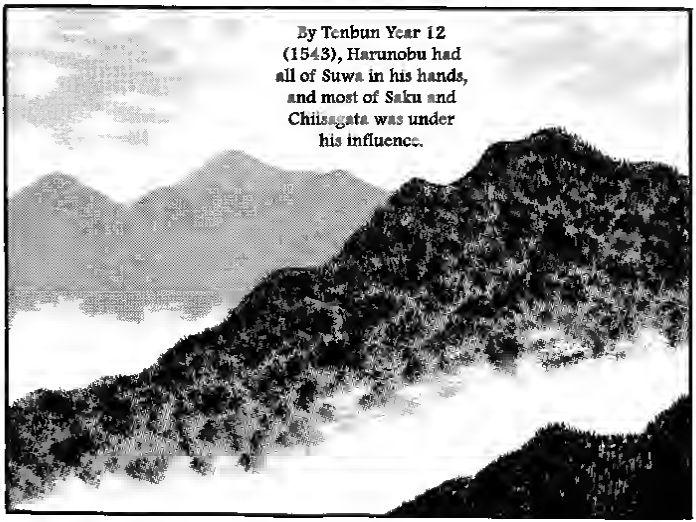

HMM... SANADA YUKITAKA HAS TAKEN SO MANY MEASURES IN SUCH A SHORT TIME. HE TRULY IS A MAN TO BE RECKONED WITH...

TAKEDA SHINGEN

TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

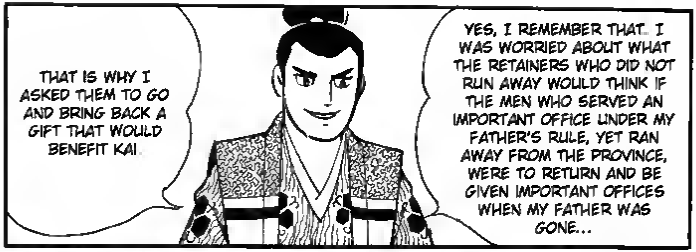
CHAPTER 20

Chapter 21: Love Triangle For The Third Daughter

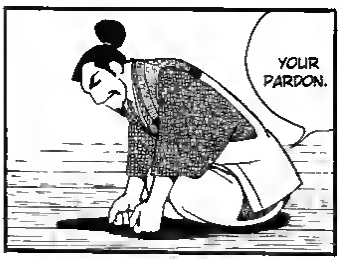


Harunobu had accomplished in two years what his father Nobutora could never do. By this time, Harunobu was 23 years old.
I THOUGHT ITAGAKI WAS CAPTURING UPPER INA. DID SOMETHING GO WRONG?
REPORTING IN. SIR ITAGAKI IS HERE TO SEE YOU.
WHAT? ITAGAKI...?

OHH, ITAGAKI! WHEN DID YOU RETURN FROM INA?
ARE YOU NOT IMAI HYOBU?
OH?
DO YOU REMEMBER TELLING YOUR FORMER MAGISTRATES TWO YEARS AGO TO COME BACK WITH SOME FORM OF GIFT, MY LORD?
IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME, MY LORD


THAT IS WHY I ASKED THEM TO GO AND BRING BACK A GIFT THAT WOULD BENEFIT KAI.
YES, I REMEMBER THAT. I WAS WORRIED ABOUT WHAT THE RETAINERS WHO DID NOT RUN AWAY WOULD THINK IF THE MEN WHO SERVED AN IMPORTANT OFFICE UNDER MY FATHER'S RULE, YET RAN AWAY FROM THE PROVINCE, WERE TO RETURN AND BE GIVEN IMPORTANT OFFICES WHEN MY FATHER WAS GONE...

OH?
SIR IMAI HYOBU HAS ENDURED MUCH HARDSHIP OVER THESE PAST TWO YEARS TO BRING BACK A MATCHLESS GIFT.

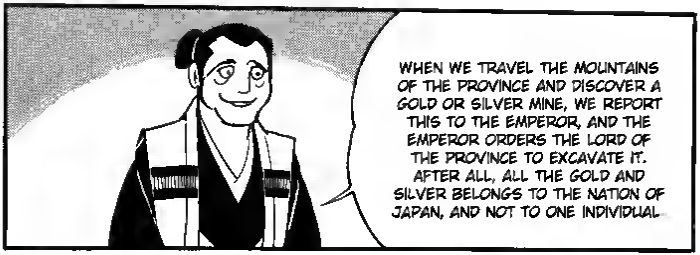

YOUR PARDON.

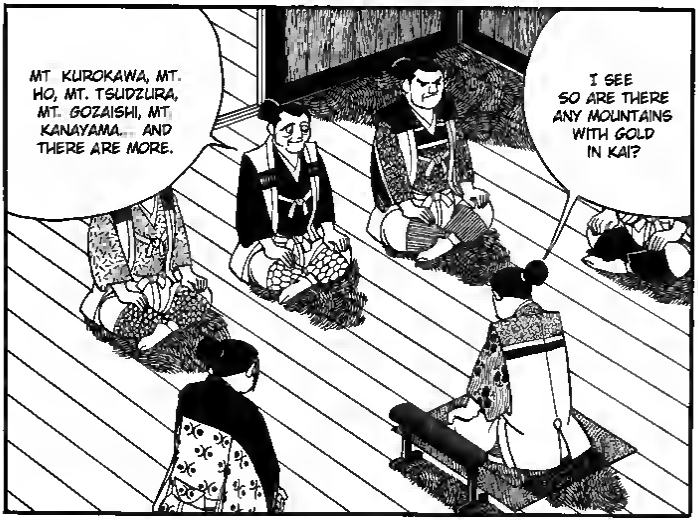
SIR HYOBU, BRING THEM IN.

ITAGAKI, HOW FARES THE BATTLE IN UPPER INA?
YOU NEED NOT WORRY ABOUT IT OUR ARMY HAS AN OVERWHELMING ADVANTAGE.
MY GIFT TO YOU IS THESE THREE GOLD MINERS. USE THESE THREE TO THEIR UTMOST POTENTIAL, AND DEVELOP THE GOLD MINES OF KAI.

I AM A MEASURER (SURVEYOR) AND MY NAME IS MOMOKAWA KAZUEMON. I DO EVERYTHING RELATED TO MEASURES, INCLUDING MEASURING AND MARKING OFF MINES, AND EXCAVATING TUNNELS.
GOOD. NOW, EACH OF YOU NAME YOURSELVES AND TELL ME YOUR SKILLS.
I AM TANBA YAJURO. MY JOB IS TO TRAVEL AROUND THE PROVINCES, STRIKING ROCKS WITH HAMMER TO DISCOVER MINES.
THOSE WOULD BE OMORI SILVER MINE OF IWAMI PROVINCE, IKUNO SILVER MINE AND SADO GOLD MINE OF TAJIMA PROVINCE, UEDA SILVER MINE OF ECHIGO PROVINCE, KAWAHARA, MATSUKURA, KAMEGAYA, YOSHINO, AND SHIMODA OF ECCHU PROVINCE, KUROMORI GOLD MINE OF IWASHIRO PROVINCE...
YOU SAY YOU HAVE TRAVELLED AROUND THE PROVINCES. WHAT ARE THE MAIN GOLD AND SILVER MINES OF THE PROVINCES?

BUT YOU HAVE NEVER PROSPECTED THE MINES OF KAI, HAVE YOU?
ENOUGH. I GET THE POINT.
WHAT!?
NO, I HAVE ALREADY PROSPECTED THE MINES OF KAI.
I DID NOT OBTAIN ANYONE'S PERMISSION. WE PROSPECTORS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO TRAVEL FREELY TO ANY MOUNTAIN IN ANY DOMAIN, EVER SINCE THE HEIAN COURT.
WHO GAVE YOU PERMISSION TO PROSPECT THE MOUNTAINS OF MY DOMAIN?
NO, THE PROSPECTOR'S JOB IS SIMPLY TO DISCOVER GOLD AND SILVER.
YOU MEAN YOU FIND THEM AND EXCAVATE THEM WITHOUT PERMISSION!?


WHEN WE TRAVEL THE MOUNTAINS OF THE PROVINCE AND DISCOVER A GOLD OR SILVER MINE, WE REPORT THIS TO THE EMPEROR, AND THE EMPEROR ORDERS THE LORD OF THE PROVINCE TO EXCAVATE IT. AFTER ALL, ALL THE GOLD AND SILVER BELONGS TO THE NATION OF JAPAN, AND NOT TO ONE INDIVIDUAL.


I SEE SO ARE THERE ANY MOUNTAINS WITH GOLD IN KAI?
MT. KUROKAWA, MT. HO, MT. TSUDZURA, MT. GOZAISHI, MT. KANAYAMA... AND THERE ARE MORE.

I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT!

THAT MANY...?

THERE ARE COUNTLESS VEINS OF QUALITY ORE IN ALL OF JAPAN, IT MAY ONLY BE NEXT TO SADO GOLD MINE.
IT HAS BEEN LONG SINCE KNOWN THAT THERE HAS BEEN GOLD DUST IN THE AREA. THERE IS NOT MUCH GOLD DUST ANYMORE, BUT THERE IS GOLD ORE.
AND WHICH OF THOSE WOULD PRODUCE THE MOST GOLD...?
THAT WOULD BE MT. KUROKAWA
THAT WOULD BE WHERE OKURA SOUEMON COMES IN
BUT HOW DO WE REMOVE THE GOLD FROM THE ROCK?
THIS MAN WAS ONCE A NOH ACTOR OF THE OKURA SCHOOL, BUT FOR WHATEVER REASON HE CAME TO BE INTERESTED IN MINING, AND HAS INVENTED NEW WAYS OF GATHERING GOLD.

SO WHAT IS THIS METHOD?
OH HE IS QUITE THE ODD ONE
PRETEND THIS STONE IS GOLD ORE, AND THE BLUE FLECKS ON THE WHITE STONE ARE GOLD.
YOU MIX THE GOLD AND LEAD TOGETHER?
TO EXTRACT THE GOLD, WE FIRST DIG UP THE STONE, GRIND IT INTO DUST, SIFT IT AND WASH IT WITH WATER TO SEPARATE THE STONE FROM NON-STONE, THEN HEAT IT AND MIX IT WITH BOILING LEAD.

INDEED. AT FIRST, WE MIX THE GOLD AND LEAD TOGETHER, MAKING USE OF THE PROPERTY OF METALS TO CLING TO EACH OTHER. THE NEXT STEP IS TO USE ASH TO ABSORB THE LEAD, SO ONLY THE GOLD REMAINS. THIS IS CALLED CUPELLATION.
THERE HAVE BEEN MANY BEFORE ME WHO DEVISED A SIMILAR METHOD, BUT I HAVE NOT HEARD OF ANYONE USING THIS METHOD ON A LARGE SCALE.
I SEE. DID YOU COME UP WITH THIS?
THAT DEPENDS ON THE AMOUNT OF ORE.
CAN WE OBTAIN LARGE AMOUNTS OF GOLD BY USING IT ON A LARGE SCALE?
I HAVE AN ESTIMATE.
HAVE YOU MEASURED THE KURO-KAWA GOLD MINE?

I ESTIMATE ABOUT FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND RYO.
HOW MUCH GOLD DO YOU ESTIMATE IS THERE?
WHEN DID YOU GO MEASURE MT. KUROKAWA?
NOT THREE MONTHS AGO.
FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND RYO!?
AND YOU CAME UP WITH FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND RYO? IF THAT NUMBER IS ACCURATE, THIS WOULD BE A DREAM FOR THE TAKEDA CLAN!

BUT THAT SAID, IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT TO MINE ALL THAT GOLD
DO NOT PANIC, NOBUKATA. THAT GOLD HAS NOT YET BEEN MINED. IF IT HAS NOT BEEN MINED, IT MAY AS WELL NOT BE THERE.
WITH ABOUT A THOUSAND MEN, INCLUDING MASONS, MINERS, CARPENTERS, AND SMELTERS, WE COULD PRODUCE TEN THOUSAND RYO EVERY YEAR.
IF WE ARE TO MINE THIS GOLD, WE WILL NEED TO GATHER A SUITABLE NUMBER OF PEOPLE. HOW MANY PEOPLE DO YOU SUPPOSE WE WILL REQUIRE?
HYOBU, YOU HAVE BROUGHT ME WHAT SOUNDS LIKE A DREAM. WHEN WILL YOU DELIGHT ME BY PROVING THIS GIFT IS NO MERE DREAM?
TEN THOU-SAND RYO!?
GOOD. GET TO WORK IMMEDIATELY.
IF WE START NOW, THEN IN THREE MONTHS...

GOOD.
THEN BY YOUR PARDON

THIS TRULY DOES SOUND LIKE A DREAM, MY LORD

LIKE A DREAM, INDEED. I STILL DO NOT BELIEVE IT.

YES, MY LORD. PLEASE ENJOY THIS WONDERFUL SPRING DREAM.
NOW I WANT TO GO RIDING, WITH THIS SPRING DREAM IN MIND...
BRING ME A HORSE!

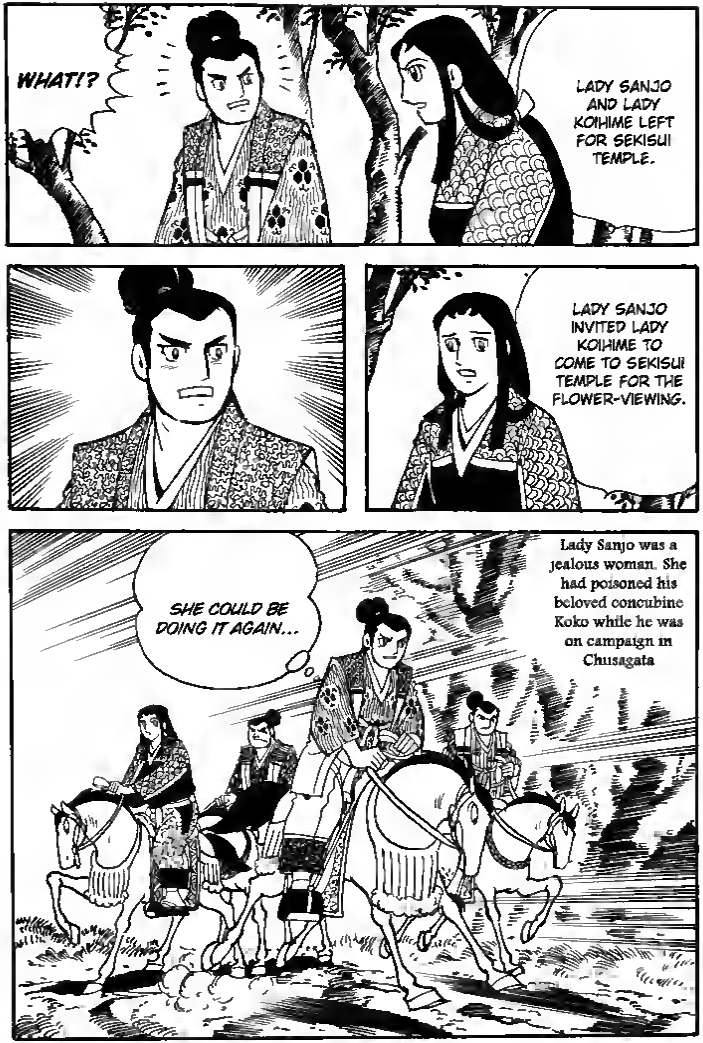
ALRIGHT.
I SHALL ACCOMPANY YOU.

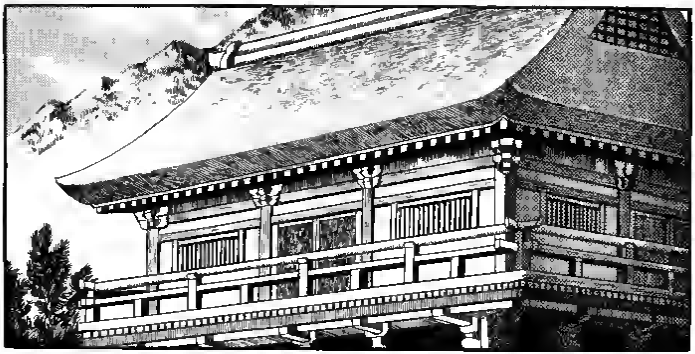
As soon as he mentioned Lady Sanjo, Harunobu remembered what had happened ten days ago.

WELL, YOU HAVE SHARP EARS. YES, I HAVE.
IS IT TRUE THAT YOU HAVE GIVEN LADY KOI THREE ROLLS OF SILK AS A GET-WELL GIFT?
WHY DID YOU DO THAT? IS NOT THREE ROLLS OF SILK A LITTLE EXCESSIVE JUST FOR BEING BEDRIDDEN WITH A MERE COLD? DO YOU INTEND ON MAKING SUWA'S ORPHAN YOUR CONCUBINE?
I AM SURE THAT KILLING THE FATHER AND TAKING HIS DAUGHTER AS A CONCUBINE WILL BRING YOU QUITE THE REPUTATION IN KYOTO.

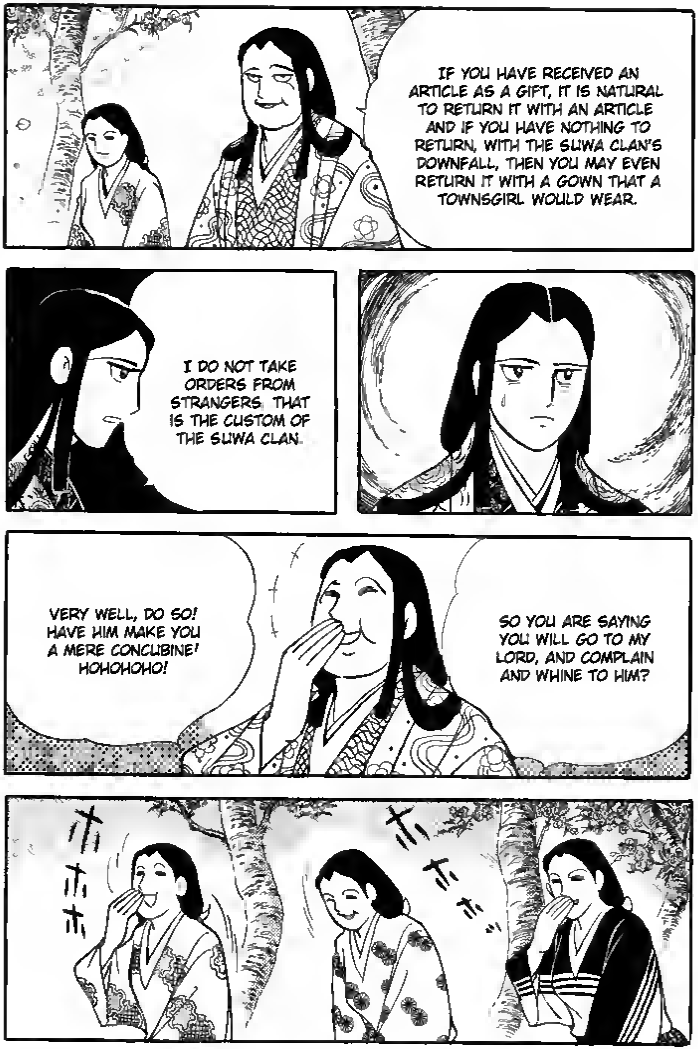
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?
WAS IT ABOUT ME?
I JUST REMEMBERED SOMETHING TRIVIAL.
OH, I KNOW! YOU WERE THINKING ABOUT LADY KOHIME, WERE YOU NOT?
SO WAS IT ABOUT LADY SANJO?
IT WAS NOT ABOUT YOU
WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?

YOU KNOW PHYSIOGNOMY, SATOMI?
WHEN I ARRIVED HERE, YOU GATHERED EVERYONE TOGETHER AND HELD A POETRY CONTEST. AND WHEN YOU WERE LOOKING AT KOIHIME READING HER POEM, YOUR EYES WERE VERY PASSIONATE.
AND WHAT IF I DO TAKE A LIKING TO KOIHIME?
LET'S JUST CALL IT A WOMAN'S INTUITION.
OH, THAT REMINDS ME...
WOULD IT NOT BE GOOD IF YOU TOOK HER IN AS YOUR CONCUBINE? THERE ARE FEW CLANS AS DISTINGUISHED AS THE SUWA, AND THEY ARE EVEN OF HIGHER RANK THAN THE SANJO. PLUS, IT WOULD RESULT IN A BINDING ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE TAKEDA AND SUWA
WHAT IS IT?


WHAT!?
LADY SANJO AND LADY KOIHIME LEFT FOR SEKISUI TEMPLE.
LADY SANJO INVITED LADY KOIHIME TO COME TO SEKISUI TEMPLE FOR THE FLOWER-VIEWING.
SHE COULD BE DOING IT AGAIN...
Lady Sanjo was a jealous woman. She had poisoned his beloved concubine Koko while he was on campaign in Chusagata



I DO NOT WISH TO.
WHY DON'T YOU EAT?
IS IT THE CUSTOM IN KYOTO TO FORCE PEOPLE TO EAT IF THEY REFUSE?
BUT I INVITED YOU HERE TO SEE THE FLOWERS ARE YOU NOT LACKING COURTESY?
I SUPPOSE YOU WILL BE ASKING MY LORD HOW YOU CAN THANK HIM FOR HIS GET-WELL GIFT HE GAVE YOU WHEN YOU HAD YOUR COLD, BUT I ASK THAT YOU DO NOT.
YOU RUSTIC PEOPLE OF SUWA WOULD NEVER UNDERSTAND THE CUSTOMS OF KYOTO. VERY WELL, YOU DO NOT HAVE TO EAT IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO. JUST ANSWER ME THIS ONE QUESTION.


IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED AN ARTICLE AS A GIFT, IT IS NATURAL TO RETURN IT WITH AN ARTICLE AND IF YOU HAVE NOTHING TO RETURN, WITH THE SUWA CLAN'S DOWNFALL, THEN YOU MAY EVEN RETURN IT WITH A GOWN THAT A TOWNSGIRL WOULD WEAR.
I DO NOT TAKE ORDERS FROM STRANGERS. THAT IS THE CUSTOM OF THE SUWA CLAN.
SO YOU ARE SAYING YOU WILL GO TO MY LORD, AND COMPLAIN AND WHINE TO HIM?
VERY WELL, DO SO! HAVE HIM MAKE YOU A MERE CONCUBINE! HOHOHOHO!
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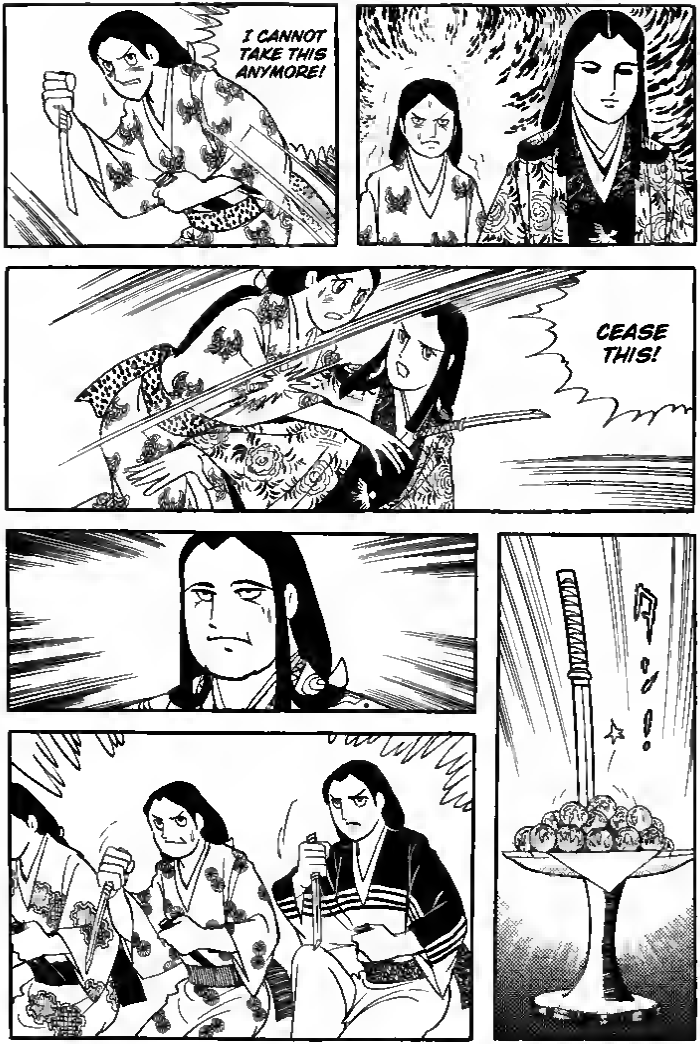
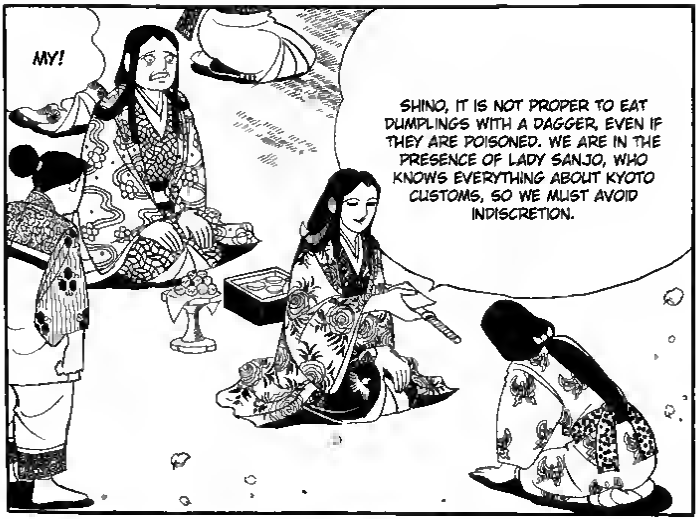
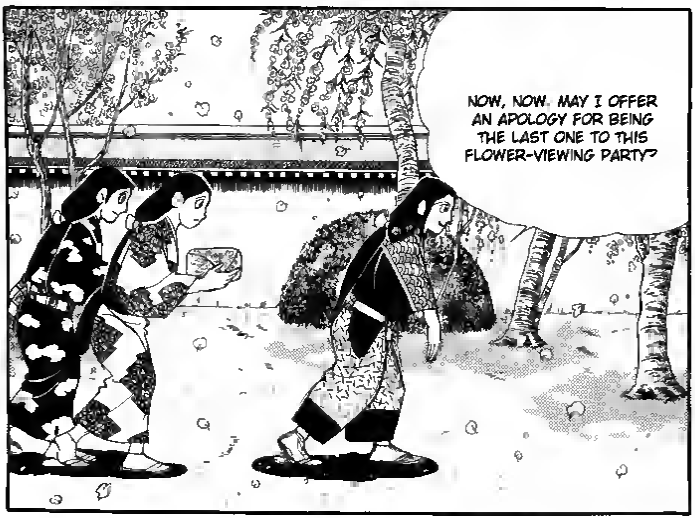

I CANNOT TAKE THIS ANYMORE!
CEASE THIS!

WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?
WHAT HAPPENED?

LADY SANJO JUST SUGGESTED THAT I BECOME YOUR CONCUBINE.
WHAT? BECOME MY CONCUBINE?
T-THESE ARE NOT THE EYES OF LOVE, NOR ARE THEY EYES FILLED WITH HATE. THEY ARE THE EYES OF ONE WHO HAS PUT HER LIFE ON THE LINE
DO YOU NOT FAVOR ME?
NO.
DO YOU HATE ME, MY LORD?

AS MY FATHER HAS PASSED AWAY, I WILL ASK MY UNCLE, SUWA MICHITSUKA, TO GIVE HIS BLESSING IN PLACE OF MY FATHER.
At that moment, Kohime, who did not cry at Yorishige's death, shed a tear.
IT WOULD BE THE GREATEST HONOR FOR THE TAKEDA CLAN AND FOR HARUNOBU TO ACCEPT A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF THE SUWA CLAN. I WILL SOON SEND A MESSENGER TO SEND FOR YOU.
WHETHER A LEGAL WIFE OR A CONCUBINE, I WILL STILL BE A WIFE. IT IS NATURAL TO OBTAIN MY FATHER'S BLESSING.
MY! DO YOU NEED A BLESSING TO BECOME A CONCUBINE?

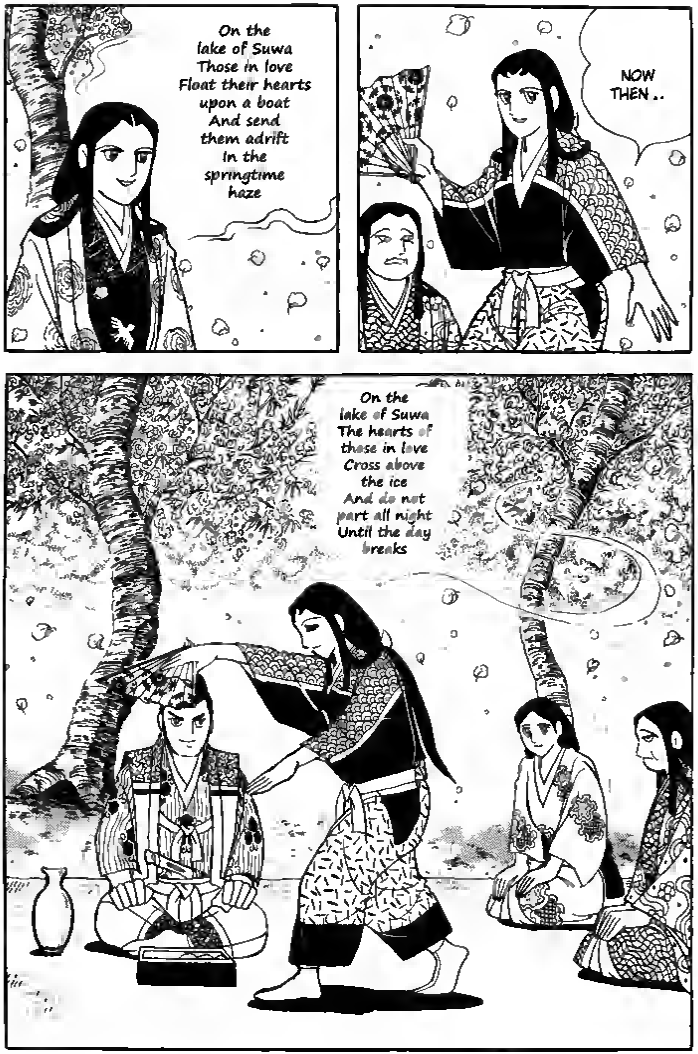

MY!
SHINO, IT IS NOT PROPER TO EAT DUMPLINGS WITH A DAGGER, EVEN IF THEY ARE POISONED. WE ARE IN THE PRESENCE OF LADY SANJO, WHO KNOWS EVERYTHING ABOUT KYOTO CUSTOMS, SO WE MUST AVOID INDISCRETION.

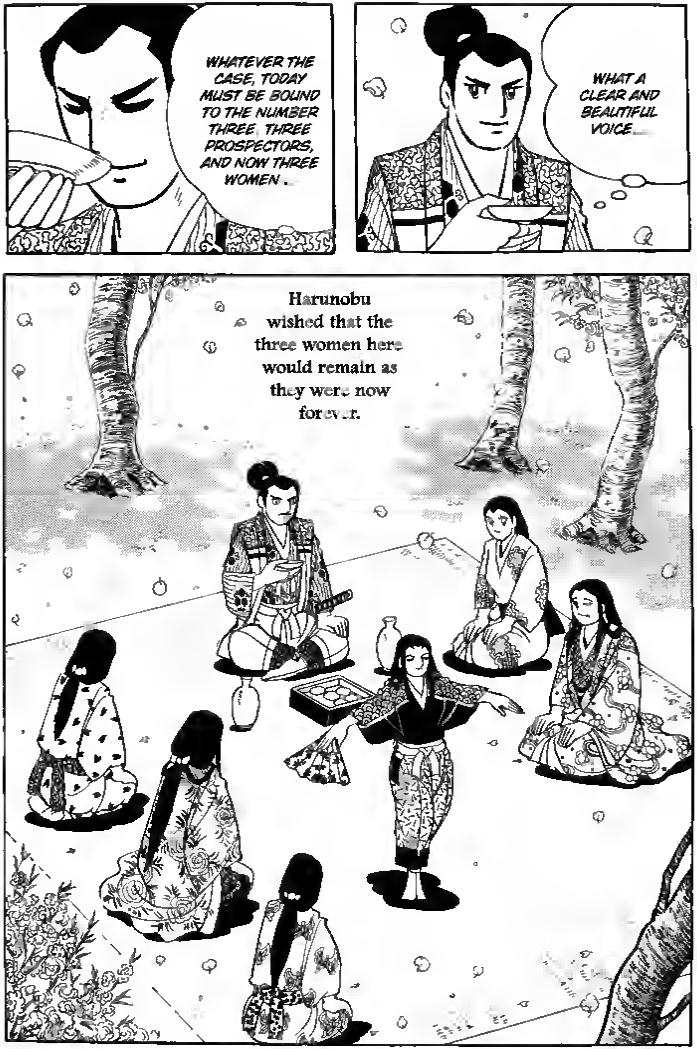

NOW, NOW. MAY I OFFER AN APOLOGY FOR BEING THE LAST ONE TO THIS FLOWER-VIEWING PARTY?

Satomi nonchalantly offered food so as not to hurt Lady Sanjo.
NOW, THESE MUST BE LEFTOVERS YOU MAY HAVE THEM IF YOU PLEASE.
I HAVE PREPARED SOME RICE CAKES FROM MY BIRTHPLACE.
YES.
HERE, MY LORD YOU HAVE ONE FIRST
GO RIGHT AHEAD, LADY SANJO.
MMM. THESE ARE GOOD RICE CAKES

THANK YOU..
YOU, TOO, LADY KOIHIME.
HERE YOU ARE.
I TRULY PREFER WINE OVER RICE CAKES MYSELF
THANK YOU.
WHENEVER I DRINK, IT MAKES ME WANT TO SING!
OHHH, IT'S DELI-CIOUS!

MAY I SING, MY LORD? WHEN I SING, I ALSO WANT TO DANCE
TEEHEE HEE...
VERY WELL. SING AND DANCE TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT.
OH, WILL YOU SING FOR ME THEN?
I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO SEE YOUR DANCE, LADY SATOMI I CANNOT DANCE, BUT I CAN SING.


On the lake of Suwa Those in love Float their hearts upon a boat And send them adrift In the springtime haze
NOW THEN..
On the lake of Suwa The hearts of those in love Cross above the ice And do not part all night Until the day breaks

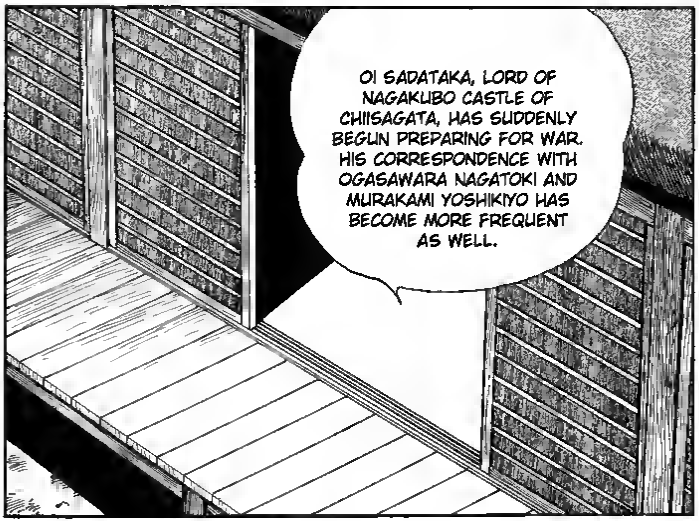

WHATEVER THE CASE, TODAY MUST BE BOUND TO THE NUMBER THREE. THREE PROSPECTORS, AND NOW THREE WOMEN.
WHAT A CLEAR AND BEAUTIFUL VOICE...
Harunobu wished that the three women here would remain as they were now forever.

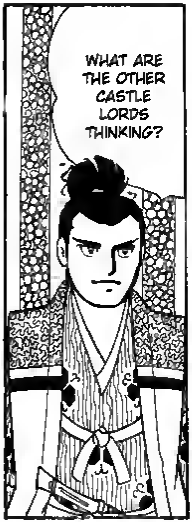
TAKEDA SHINGEN

TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

CHAPTER 21

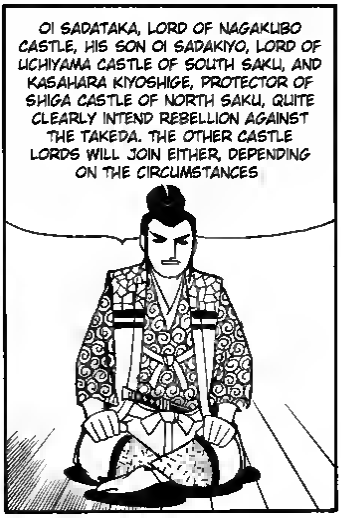
Chapter 22: The Female Truce Bearer


OI SADATAKA, LORD OF NAGAKUBO CASTLE OF CHIISAGATA, HAS SUDDENLY BEGUN PREPARING FOR WAR. HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH OGASAWARA NAGATOKI AND MURAKAMI YOSHIKIYO HAS BECOME MORE FREQUENT AS WELL.

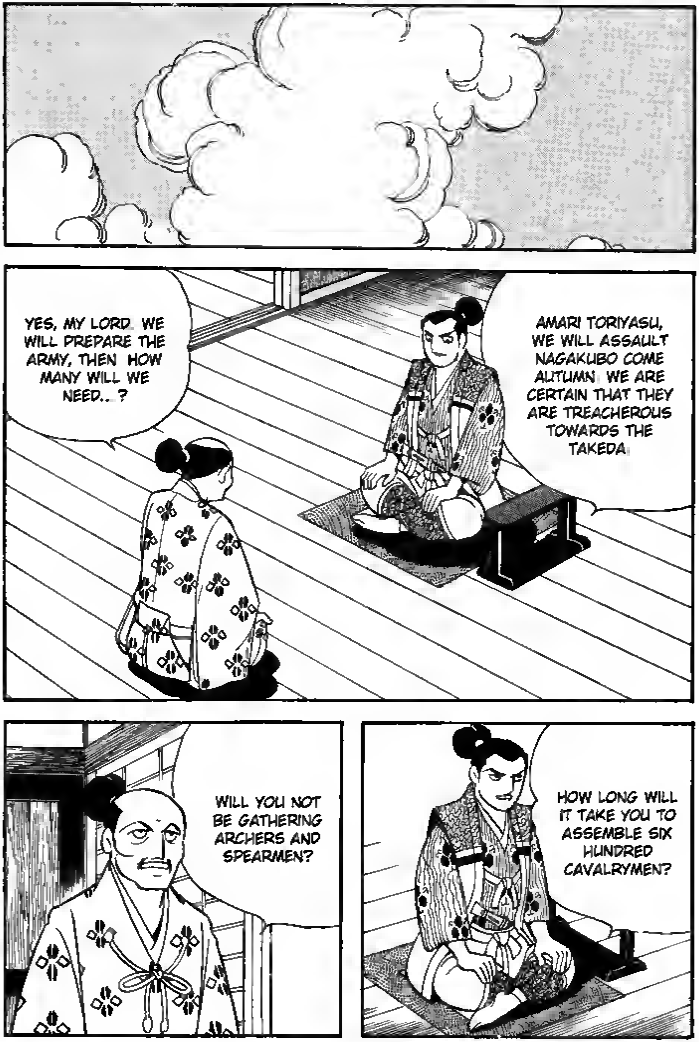

WHAT ARE THE OTHER CASTLE LORDS THINKING?

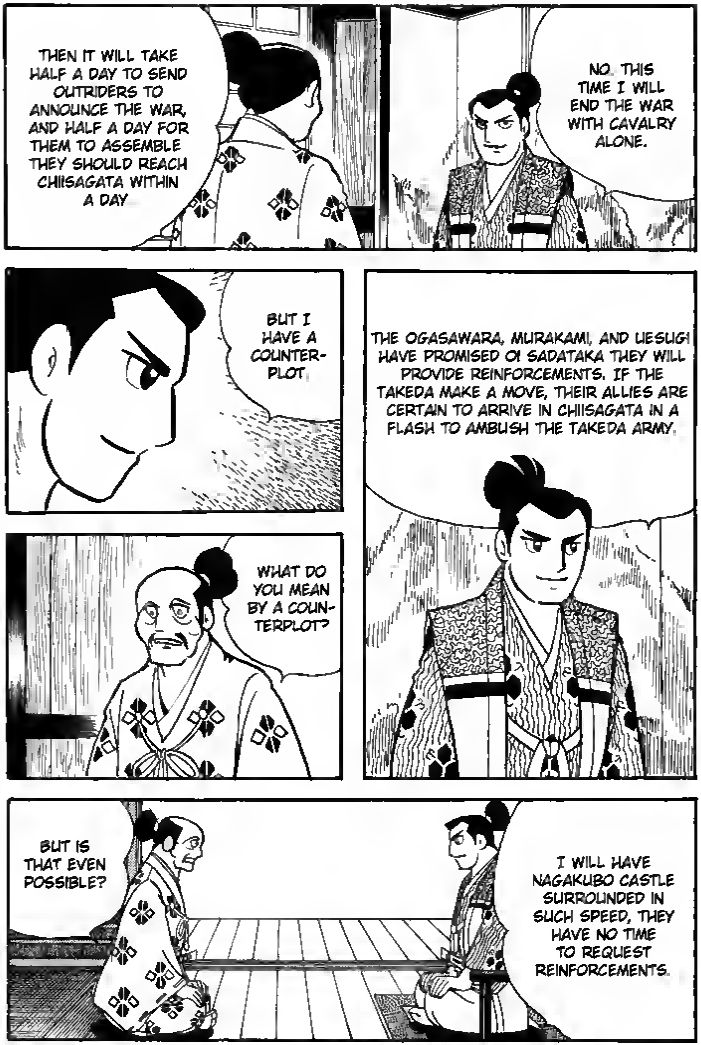
HE IS PREPARING FOR A DEFENSIVE. BUT I BELIEVE WE DO NOT STAND MUCH OF A CHANCE SURROUNDED ON ALL SIDES.
AND WHAT IS SANADA YUKITAKA DOING?

YES, MY LORD.
UCHIYAMA CASTLE AND SHIGA CASTLE ARE ALONG THE BORDER WITH KOZUKE THOSE TWO CASTLES MUST BE RECEIVING REINFORCEMENTS FROM UESUGI NORIMASA


OI SADATAKA, LORD OF NAGAKUBO CASTLE, HIS SON OI SADAKIYO, LORD OF UCHIYAMA CASTLE OF SOUTH SAKU, AND KASAHARA KIYOSHIGE, PROTECTOR OF SHIGA CASTLE OF NORTH SAKU, QUITE CLEARLY INTEND REBELLION AGAINST THE TAKEDA. THE OTHER CASTLE LORDS WILL JOIN EITHER, DEPENDING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES

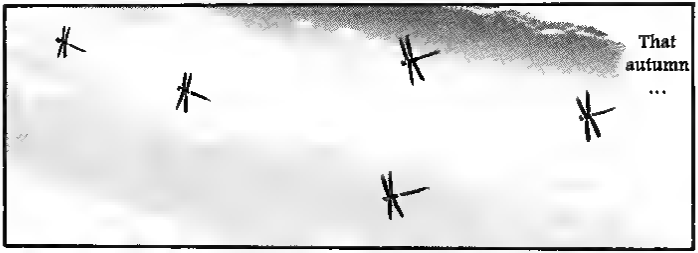
THEY ARE BOTH MOUNTAIN STRONGHOLDS.
WHAT KIND OF CASTLES ARE THEY?
AND THEIR WATER SUPPLY?
YES, MY LORD.
A MOUNTAIN CASTLE WILL NOT FALL EASILY BY A HEAD-ON SIEGE. BUT CUT OFF THEIR WATER SUPPLY, AND THEY WILL FALL WITHOUT A FIGHT.
WE DO NOT YET KNOW AS OF THIS MOMENT.
YES, MY LORD.
GOOD. THEN POSTPONE CAPTURING UCHIYAMA CASTLE AND SHIGA CASTLE UNTIL YOU HAVE CONFIRMED IT.

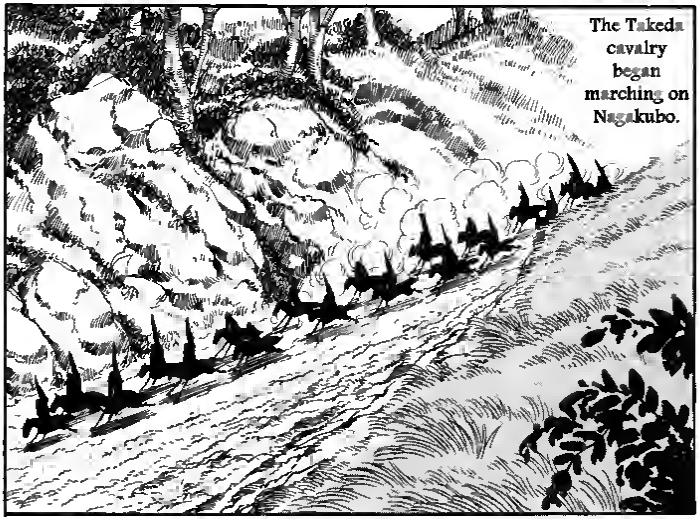

AMARI TORIYASU, WE WILL ASSAULT NAGAKUBO COME AUTUMN. WE ARE CERTAIN THAT THEY ARE TREACHEROUS TOWARDS THE TAKEDA.
YES, MY LORD. WE WILL PREPARE THE ARMY, THEN HOW MANY WILL WE NEED.. ?
HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE YOU TO ASSEMBLE SIX HUNDRED CAVALRYMEN?
WILL YOU NOT BE GATHERING ARCHERS AND SPEARMEN?

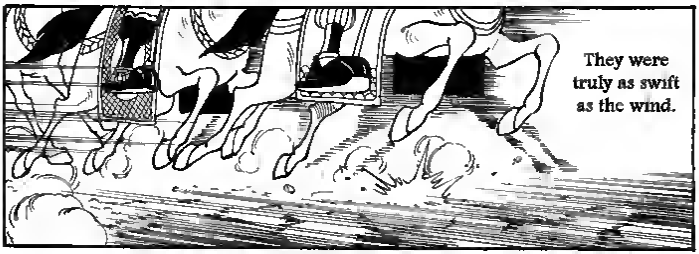

THEN IT WILL TAKE HALF A DAY TO SEND OUTRIDERS TO ANNOUNCE THE WAR, AND HALF A DAY FOR THEM TO ASSEMBLE THEY SHOULD REACH CHIISAGATA WITHIN A DAY.
NO. THIS TIME I WILL END THE WAR WITH CAVALRY ALONE.
BUT I HAVE A COUNTER-PLOT.
THE OGASAWARA, MURAKAMI, AND UESUGI HAVE PROMISED OI SADATAKA THEY WILL PROVIDE REINFORCEMENTS. IF THE TAKEDA MAKE A MOVE, THEIR ALLIES ARE CERTAIN TO ARRIVE IN CHIISAGATA IN A FLASH TO AMBUSH THE TAKEDA ARMY.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY A COUNTERPLOT?
BUT IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE?
I WILL HAVE NAGAKUBO CASTLE SURROUNDED IN SUCH SPEED, THEY HAVE NO TIME TO REQUEST REINFORCEMENTS.

BUT IF THE ENEMY HOLDS OUT FOR TEN DAYS, THE REINFORCEMENTS WILL MAKE IT.
THERE ARE NO DOUBT SPIES AND NINJAS HIDDEN WITHIN KOFU AS WELL. WE WILL REACH NAGAKUBO BEFORE THEM. THEN THEY WILL HAVE NO TIME TO REQUEST REINFORCEMENTS.
BY THE WAY, I AM THINKING OF SENDING FOR KOIHIME. WHAT DO YOU THINK?
NO NEED TO WORRY.
IS IT TOO SOON?
THAT IS ENTIRELY UP TO YOU, MY LORD, BUT YOU JUST SENT FOR LADY SATOMI LAST WINTER..
IMMEDI-ATELY..?
EITHER WAY, I MUST MAKE A FORMAL REQUEST TO SUWA MITSUCHIKA OF THE SUWA. SUWA MITSUCHIKA IS KOIHIME'S UNCLE, AND WILL BE ACTING IN HER FATHER'S PLACE TO GIVE HIS BLESSING. SO GO TO SUWA IMMEDIATELY.

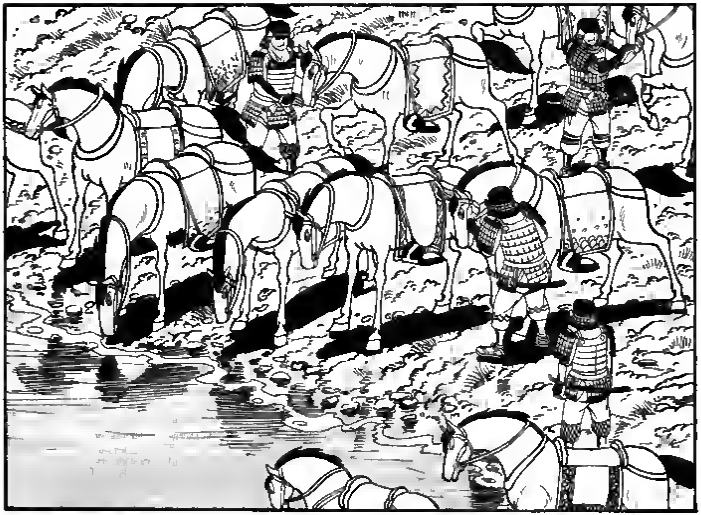
THAT CAN WAIT UNTIL KOIHIME'S BLESSING IS GIVEN.
BUT WHAT ABOUT PREPARING TO MARCH ON CHIISAGATA?
YES. I AM DEPENDING ON YOU.
THEN BY YOUR LEAVE.
IF THE MASTER AND KOIHIME ARE BOUND, THAT WILL MEAN THE UNIFICATION OF THE TAKEDA AND SUWA. POLITICALLY SPEAKING, THAT IS NOT A BAD MANEUVER.

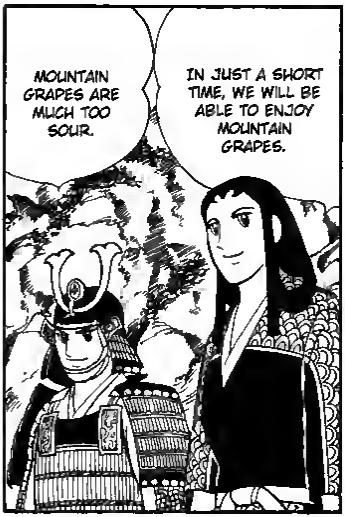

That autumn ...


The Takeda cavalry began marching on Nagakubo.


They were truly as swift as the wind.

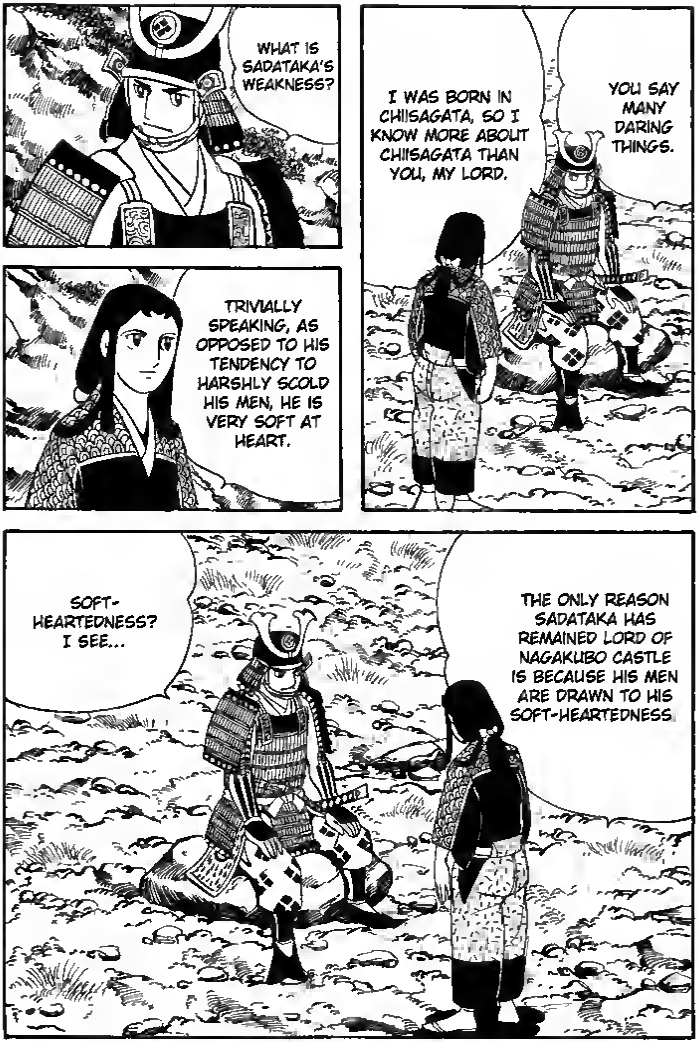
And Satomi took the lead.
THIS IS NO MERE RIDE. SHE IS ONLY SHOWING OFF.
LADY SATOMI'S HORSEMANSHIP IS AS IMPRESSIVE AS EVER.
WE SHALL STOP TO REST HERE! GIVE THE HORSES WATER AND FODDER!
I ONLY GAVE HER PERMISSION BECAUSE SHE SAID SHE WOULD RIDE AT THE BACK OF THE CAVALRY UNIT SO AS NOT TO GET IN OUR WAY...



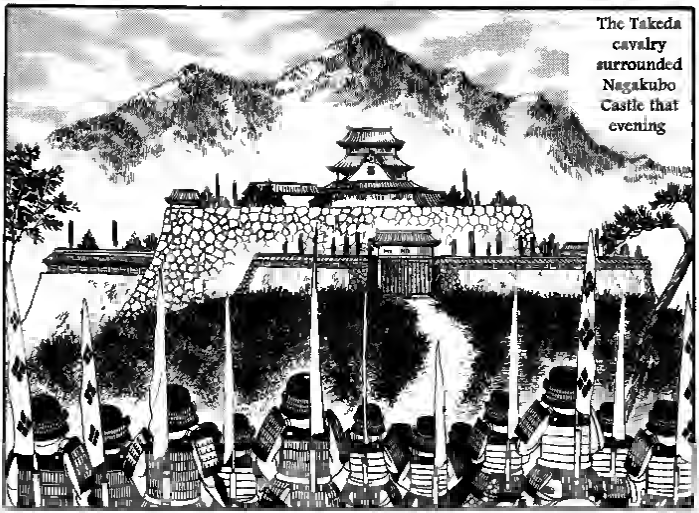

MOUNTAIN GRAPES ARE MUCH TOO SOUR.
IN JUST A SHORT TIME, WE WILL BE ABLE TO ENJOY MOUNTAIN GRAPES.

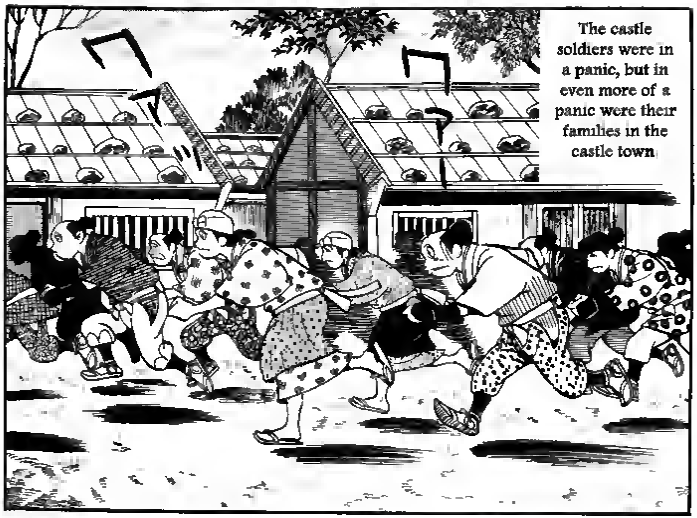
NOT IN PARTICULAR.
WOULD YOU FANCY SOMETHING TO EAT, MY LORD?

I AM AWARE OF THAT. BUT OI SADATAKA OF NAGAKUBO CASTLE IS NOT A FOE WORTH MY LORD'S ATTENTION. MEN LIKE OI SADATAKA ARE THE FIRST TO DIE IN THIS AGE OF WARRING STATES...
WATCH YOUR WORDS, SATOMI. WE HAVE COME HERE TO BESIEGE NAGAKUBO CASTLE.
BUT WINE MADE FROM MOUNTAIN GRAPES IS VERY DELICIOUS. ONCE WE REACH CHIISAGATA, I SHALL RUN OVER TO THE VILLAGE OF NEZU AND BRING SOME BACK WITH ME.
MY FATHER NEZU SAID THAT QUITE OFTEN.
WHO SAID THAT?
YES. HE IS INCREDIBLY SIMPLE AND NOT CLEVER AT ALL. HE IS A MAN WHO WOULD BE SWAYED JUST BY A LITTLE FLATTERY.
DID HE KNOW OI SADATAKA WELL?

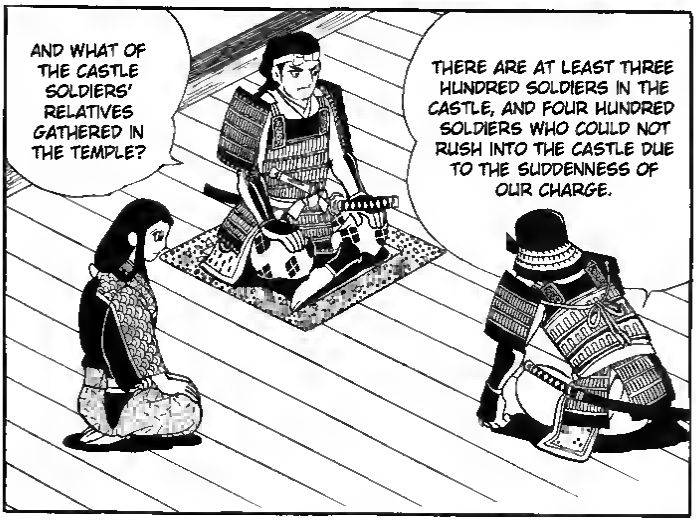

WHAT IS SADATAKA'S WEAKNESS?
TRIVIALLY SPEAKING, AS OPPOSED TO HIS TENDENCY TO HARSHLY SCOLD HIS MEN, HE IS VERY SOFT AT HEART.
YOU SAY MANY DARING THINGS.
I WAS BORN IN CHIISAGATA, SO I KNOW MORE ABOUT CHIISAGATA THAN YOU, MY LORD.
SOFT-HEARTEDNESS? I SEE...
THE ONLY REASON SADATAKA HAS REMAINED LORD OF NAGAKUBO CASTLE IS BECAUSE HIS MEN ARE DRAWN TO HIS SOFT-HEARTEDNESS.

YES, MY LORD?
TORA-YASU!
YES, MY LORD.
ONCE YOU REACH NAGAKUBO, HAVE THREE HUNDRED MEN SURROUND THE CASTLE, AND SEND THE OTHER THREE HUNDRED INTO THE STREETS OF THE CASTLE TOWN TO CAPTURE THE FAMILIES OF THE CASTLE SOLDIERS.
NOW, WE RIDE OUT!

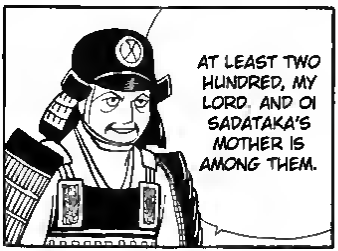

The Takeda cavalry surrounded Nagakubo Castle that evening


The castle soldiers were in a panic, but in even more of a panic were their families in the castle town

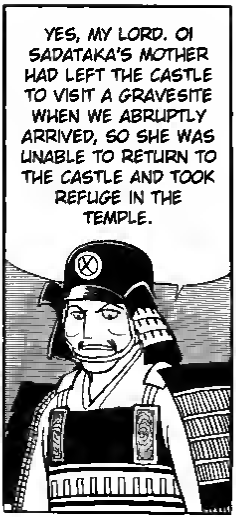
ANYONE WHO REFUSES TO COMPLY AND GATHER IN THE TEMPLE SHALL BE SLAUGHTERED AS A REBEL DOG!
SILENCE! SILENCE! TAKE ONE STEP OUTSIDE OF NAGAKUBO, AND WE SHALL SLAY YOU WITHOUT MERCY! BUT THOSE WHO ASSEMBLE IN THE TEMPLE WILL BE GIVEN PROTECTION!

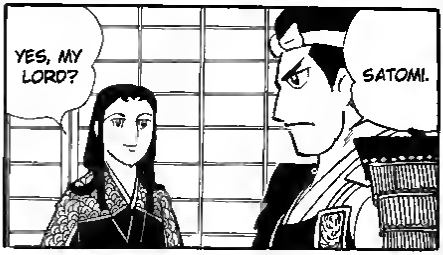

AND WHAT OF THE CASTLE SOLDIERS' RELATIVES GATHERED IN THE TEMPLE?
THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE HUNDRED SOLDIERS IN THE CASTLE, AND FOUR HUNDRED SOLDIERS WHO COULD NOT RUSH INTO THE CASTLE DUE TO THE SUDDENNESS OF OUR CHARGE.

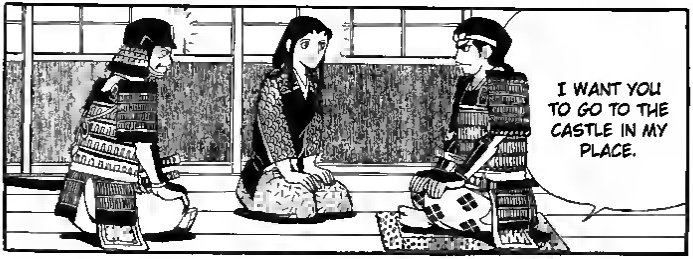
WHAT? YOU HAVE TAKEN OI SADATAKA'S MOTHER ALIVE?


AT LEAST TWO HUNDRED, MY LORD. AND OI SADATAKA'S MOTHER IS AMONG THEM.

I SEE. THIS WILL END MORE SIMPLY THAN I THOUGHT.


YES, MY LORD. OI SADATAKA'S MOTHER HAD LEFT THE CASTLE TO VISIT A GRAVESITE WHEN WE ABRUPTLY ARRIVED, SO SHE WAS UNABLE TO RETURN TO THE CASTLE AND TOOK REFUGE IN THE TEMPLE.


SATOMI.
YES, MY LORD?

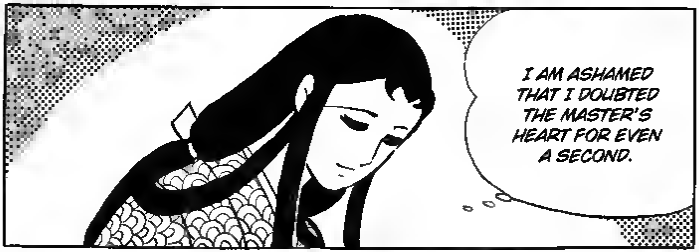

I WANT YOU TO GO TO THE CASTLE IN MY PLACE.

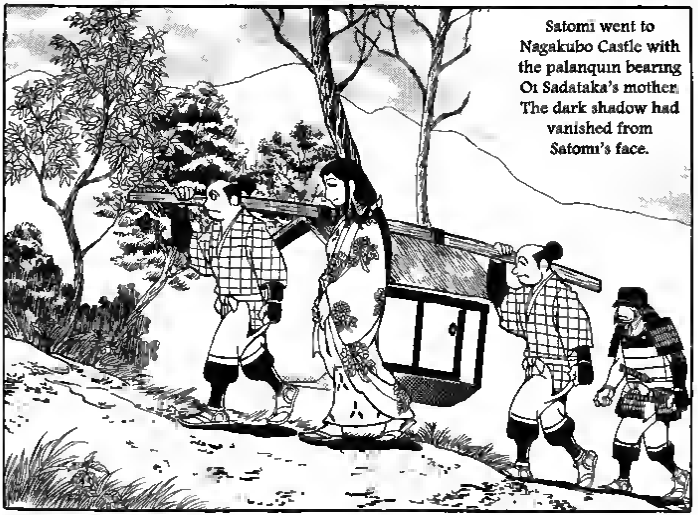
TELL OI SADATAKA THAT WE WILL SLAUGHTER THE FAMILIES OF THE CASTLE SOLDIERS IN THE TEMPLE IF HE WILL NOT SURRENDER.
TAKE OI SADATAKA'S MOTHER TO THE CASTLE ON A PALANQUIN AND SUGGEST THAT OI SADATAKA SURRENDER. THEN BRING OI SADATAKA HERE ON THE PALANQUIN.

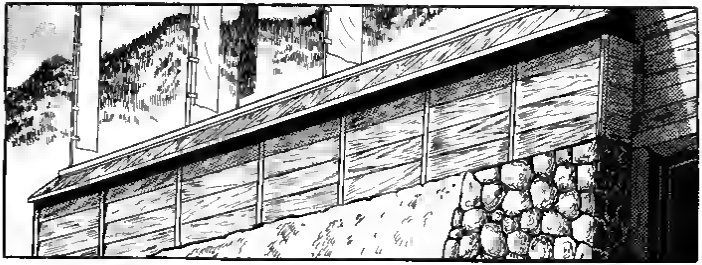
A chill ran down Satomi's spine. If Sadataka did not oblige, she would have been killed as well.
THE MASTER DOES NOT LOVE ME... IF HE LOVED ME, HE WOULD NOT GIVE ME THIS DANGEROUS TASK...
DO NOT MAKE SUCH A GRIEVOUS FACE, SATOMI.
YES, MY LORD. AS YOU COMMAND.
!
I WOULD NOT GIVE MY PRECIOUS WOMAN A DANGEROUS MISSION.

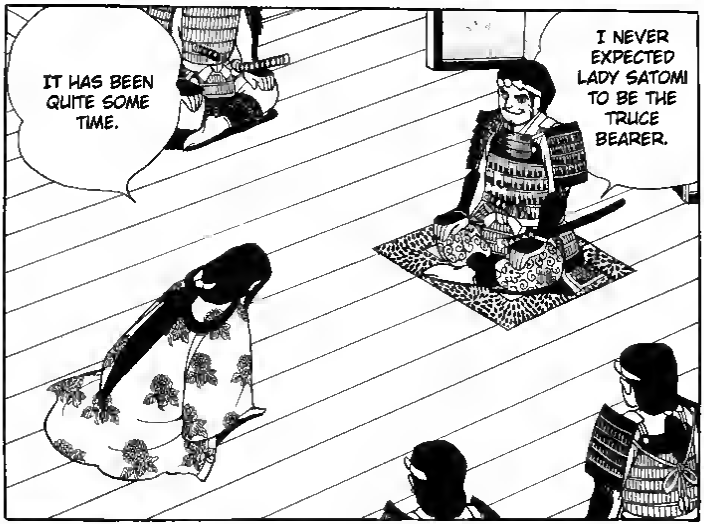
WAS IT NOT YOU WHO TOLD ME THAT SADATAKA WAS SOFT-HEARTED? BRING UP THE TWO HUNDRED FAMILY MEMBERS OF THE CASTLE SOLDIERS, AND HE WILL SURELY SURRENDER. TRUST IN MY PREDICTIONS.
IT IS NOT A SHAME AS A SAMURAI.
BUT MY LORD, IT WOULD BE A SHAME AS A SAMURAI TO SEND LADY SATOMI AS A MESSENGER FOR THIS. I SHALL SERVE YOU IN THIS ROLE.
TRACING THEIR ORIGINS BACK, THE NEZU AND OI CLANS ARE RELATED BY BLOOD. SHE ALSO HAS MANY ACQUAINTANCES IN THE CASTLE. THAT IS WHY SHE IS SUITED.
I HAVE ASKED SATOMI TO FULFILL THIS ROLE BECAUSE I JUDGE HER TO BE MOST SUITED TO THE ROLE.

YES, MY LORD.
TRUST IN ME, SATOMI.


I AM ASHAMED THAT I DOUBTED THE MASTER'S HEART FOR EVEN A SECOND.


Satomi went to Nagakubo Castle with the palanquin bearing Oi Sadataka's mother. The dark shadow had vanished from Satomi's face.

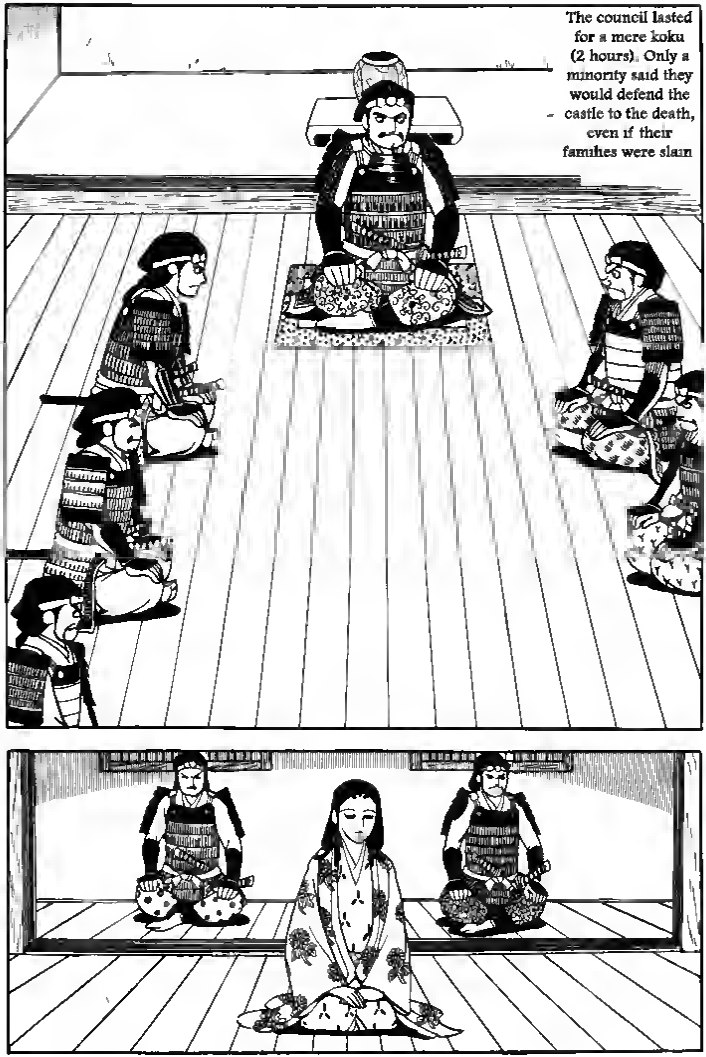


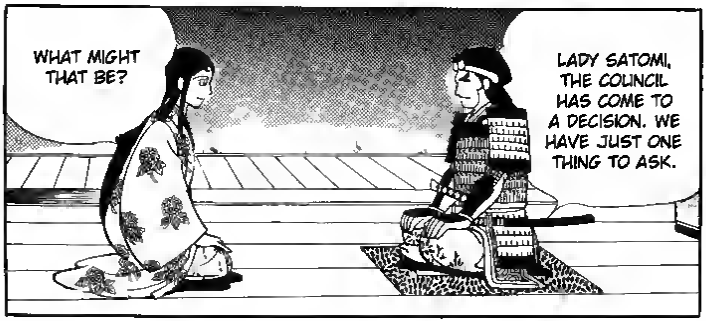

IT HAS BEEN QUITE SOME TIME.
I NEVER EXPECTED LADY SATOMI TO BE THE TRUCE BEARER.

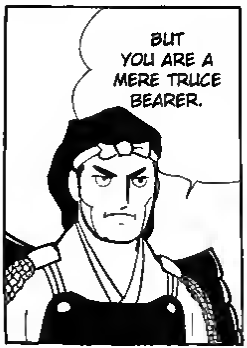
I HAVE COME TO RECOMMEND YOU JOIN THE TAKEDA.

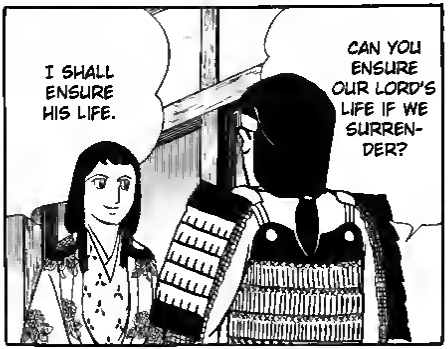
SO WHAT MESSAGE DO YOU BRING?

THE LORD OF THE TAKEDA SAYS THAT UNLESS YOU JOIN THE TAKEDA, THE TWO HUNDRED FAMILY MEMBERS OF THE CASTLE SOLDIERS WILL LOSE THEIR LIVES...
I HAVE COME WITH BURIAL CLOTHES PREPARED JUST IN CASE.
BUT IS LORD HARUNOBU BRAVE ENOUGH TO DO SO IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR LIFE?
YES, SIR.
YOU ARE WELL RESOLVED. THEN GIVE ME SOME TIME... I WISH TO DISCUSS THIS WITH MY CHIEF VASSALS.


The council lasted for a mere koku (2 hours). Only a minority said they would defend the castle to the death, even if their families were slain

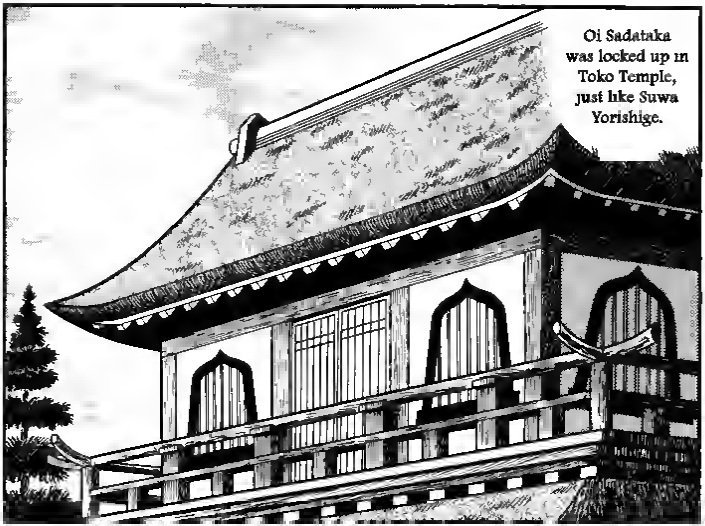

WHAT MIGHT THAT BE?
LADY SATOMI, THE COUNCIL HAS COME TO A DECISION. WE HAVE JUST ONE THING TO ASK.

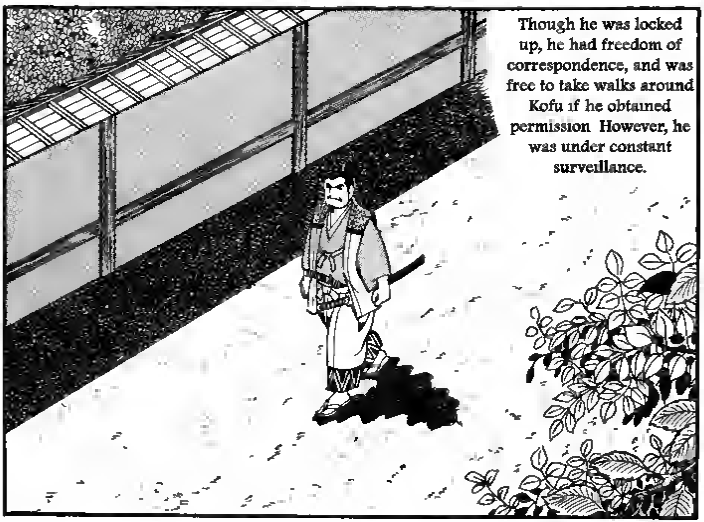

BUT YOU ARE A MERE TRUCE BEARER.

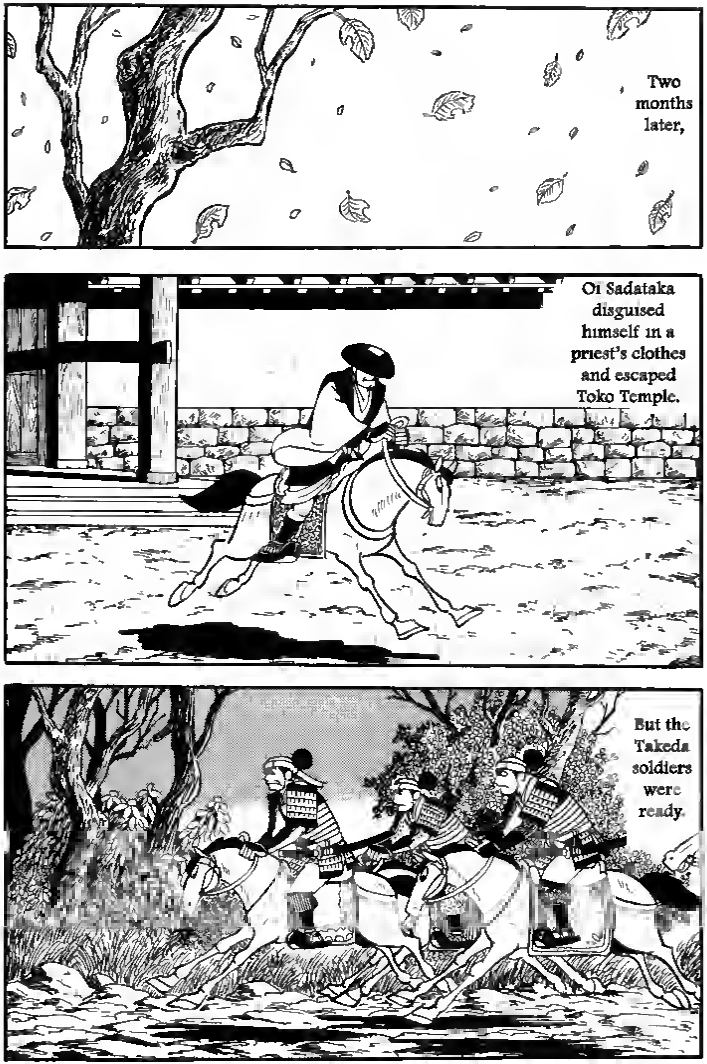

I SHALL ENSURE HIS LIFE.
CAN YOU ENSURE OUR LORD'S LIFE IF WE SURRENDER?

UNDERSTOOD. IN THAT CASE, MY LORD SAYS HE WILL COME TO KOFU.
NO, I HAVE COME HERE AS LORD HARUNOBU'S REPRESENTATIVE. THUS YOU MAY THINK OF WHAT I SAY AS LORD HARUNOBU'S WORDS.

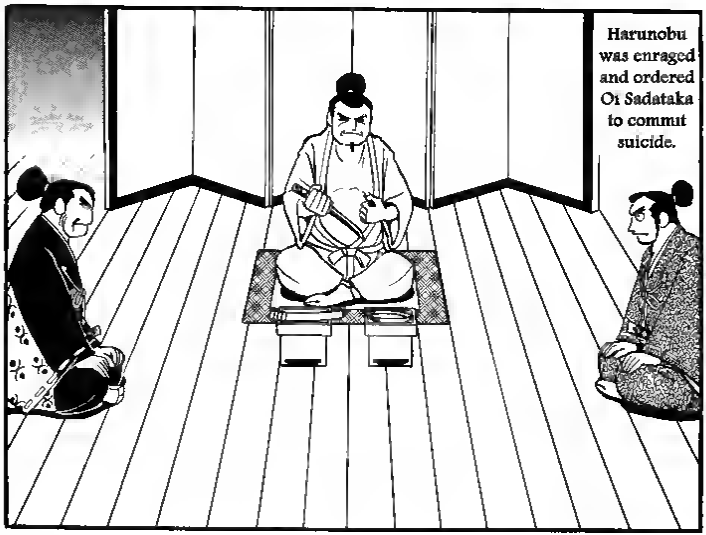
And so, Oi Sadataka entered the palanquin Nagakubo Castle, the stronghold of Chisagata, fell into the Takeda's hands without losing a single soldier

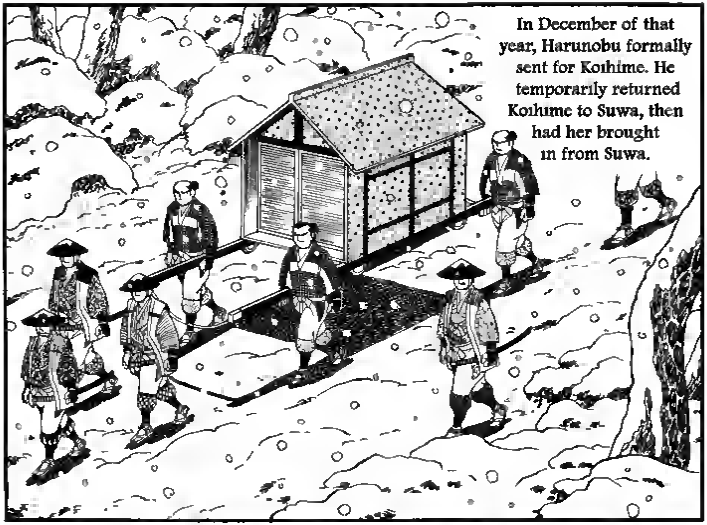

Oi Sadataka was locked up in Toko Temple, just like Suwa Yorishige.


Though he was locked up, he had freedom of correspondence, and was free to take walks around Kofu if he obtained permission However, he was under constant surveillance.

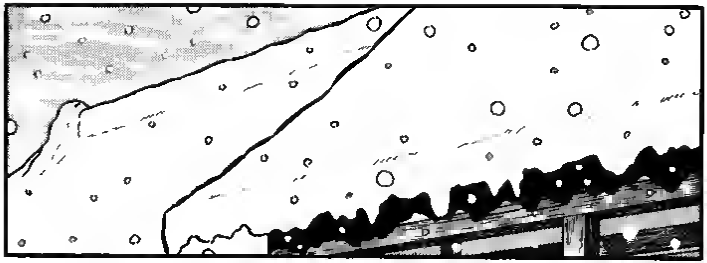

Two months later,
Oi Sadataka disguised himself in a priest's clothes and escaped Toko Temple.
But the Takeda soldiers were ready.

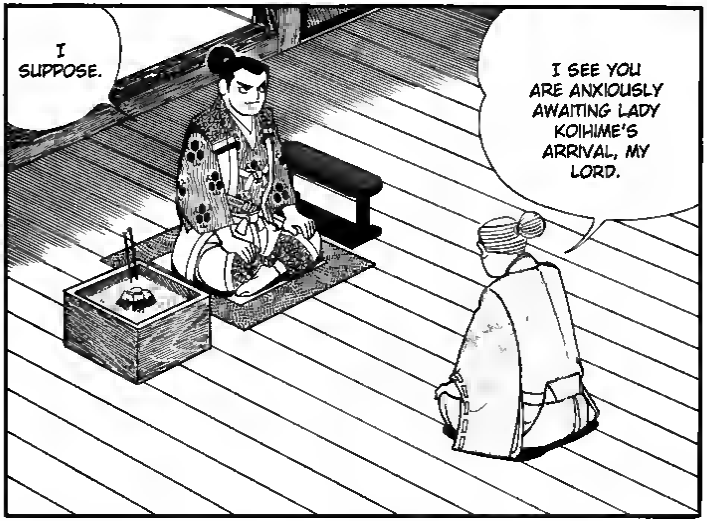
Sadataka was captured while headed for Karisaka Pass.


Harunobu was enraged and ordered Oi Sadataka to commit suicide.

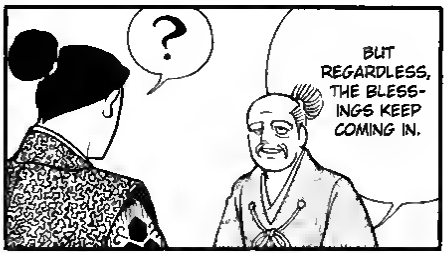

In December of that year, Harunobu formally sent for Koihime. He temporarily returned Koihime to Suwa, then had her brought in from Suwa.

The people of Suwa rejoiced, and crossed the frozen lake to bring gifts of celebration




I SUPPOSE.
I SEE YOU ARE ANXIOUSLY AWAITING LADY KOIHIME'S ARRIVAL, MY LORD.

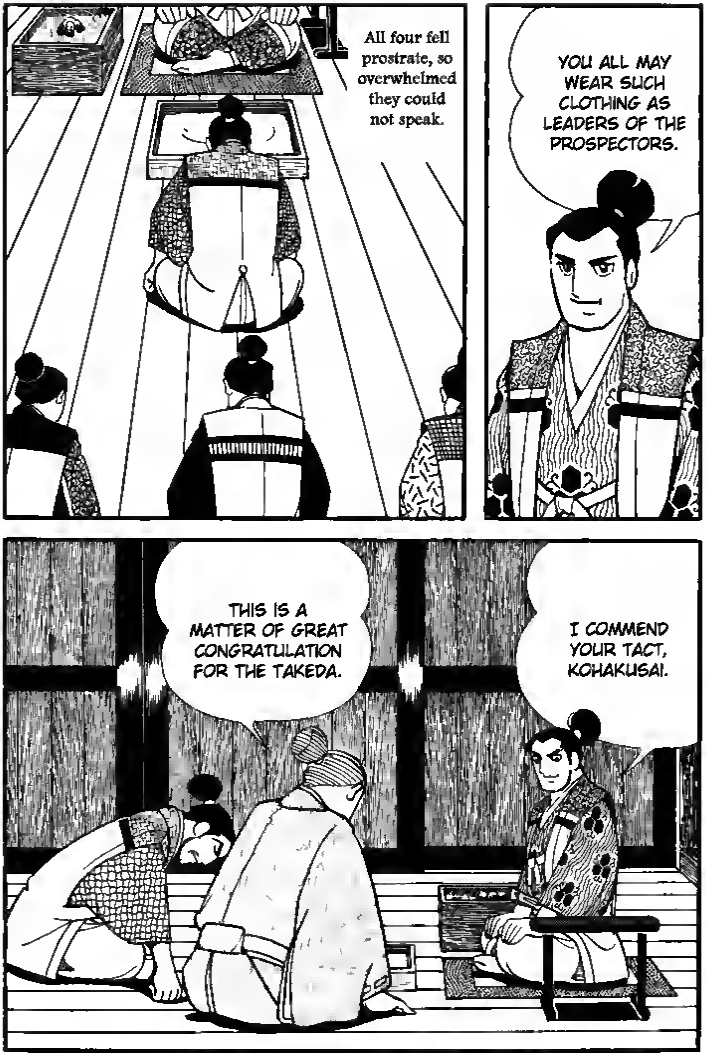
YOU. BRING IN THE CELE-BRA-TORY GIFTS.

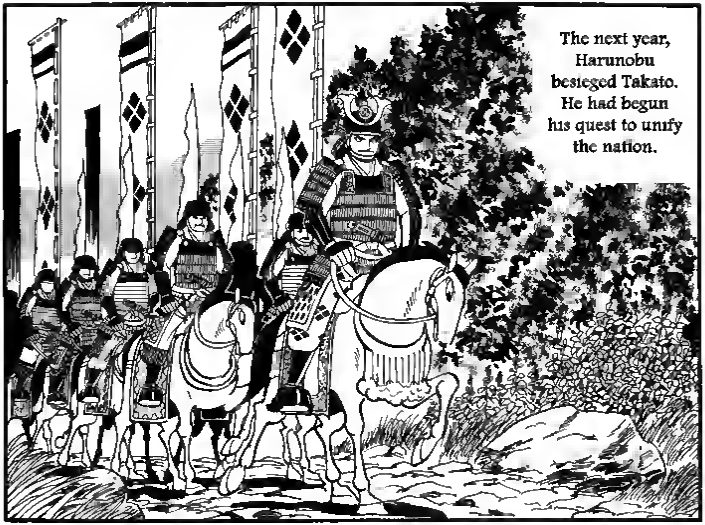

?
BUT REGARDLESS, THE BLESS-INGS KEEP COMING IN.

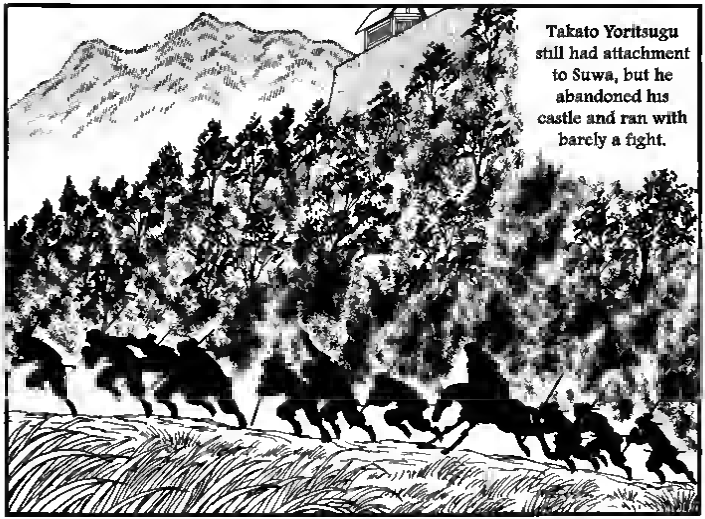
OHH! HYOBU AND THE PROSPECTORS... HAVE YOU COME TO CELEBRATE MY MARRIAGE?
YES.
PLEASE ACCEPT THIS, MY LORD.

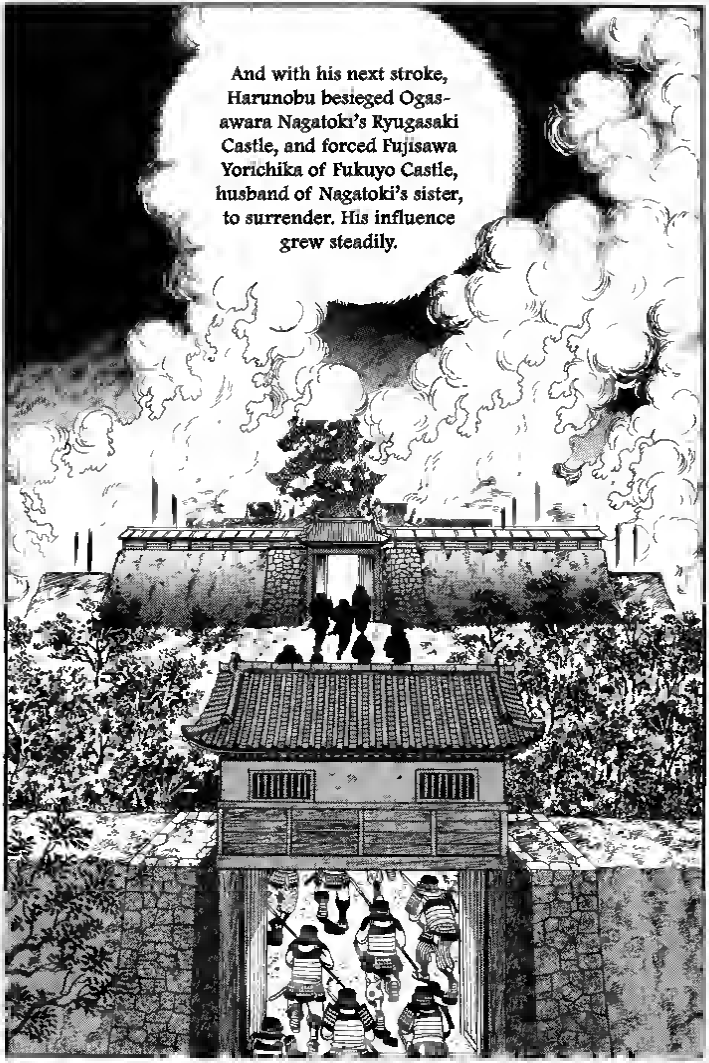
TAKEDA GOLD TAKEN FROM THE KUROKAWA GOLD MINE.
WHAT IS THIS?
I SEE SO YOU HAVE MINED IT.
THOSE WORDS ARE AN HONOR, MY LORD.
IMAI HYOBU, TANBA YAJURO, MOMOKAWA KAZUEMON, AND OKURA SOUEMON, WHAT YOU HAVE DONE IS WORTH CAPTURING A HUNDRED CASTLES.

MY LORD! PLEASE BESTOW THIS TO THEM WITH YOUR OWN HAND, TO REWARD THEIR TOILS.
I THOUGHT IT WOULD SUIT IMAI HYOBU...
AND IT HAS THE TAKEDA CREST ON IT!
OHH! A BROCADED BATTLE SURCOAT!
YES, MY LORD!
IMAI HYOBU, THIS IS A TOKEN OF MY THANKS.


All four fell prostrate, so overwhelmed they could not speak.
YOU ALL MAY WEAR SUCH CLOTHING AS LEADERS OF THE PROSPECTORS.
THIS IS A MATTER OF GREAT CONGRATULATION FOR THE TAKEDA.
I COMMEND YOUR TACT, KOHAKUSAI.


The next year, Harunobu besieged Takato. He had begun his quest to unify the nation.


Takato Yoritsugu still had attachment to Suwa, but he abandoned his castle and ran with barely a fight.

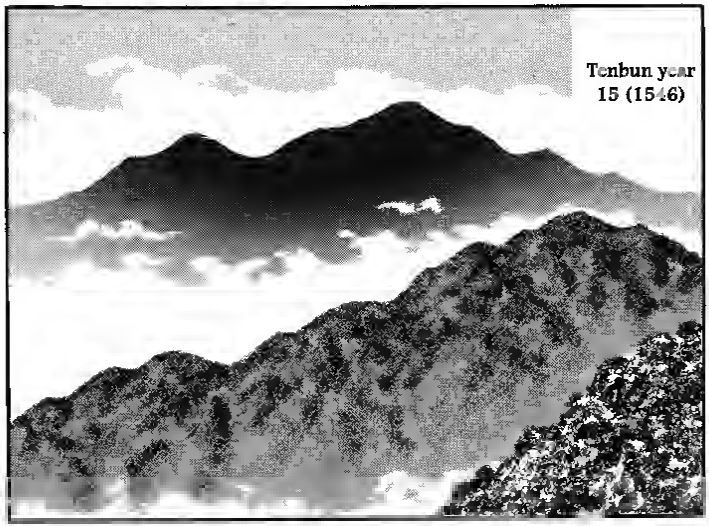

And with his next stroke, Harunobu besieged Ogasawara Nagatoki's Ryugasaki Castle, and forced Fujisawa Yorichika of Fukuyo Castle, husband of Nagatoki's sister, to surrender. His influence grew steadily.

TAKEDA SHINGEN

TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

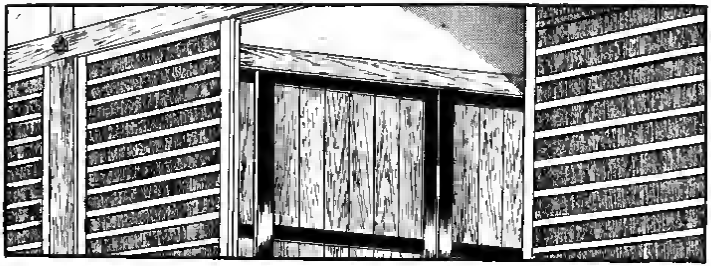
CHAPTER 22

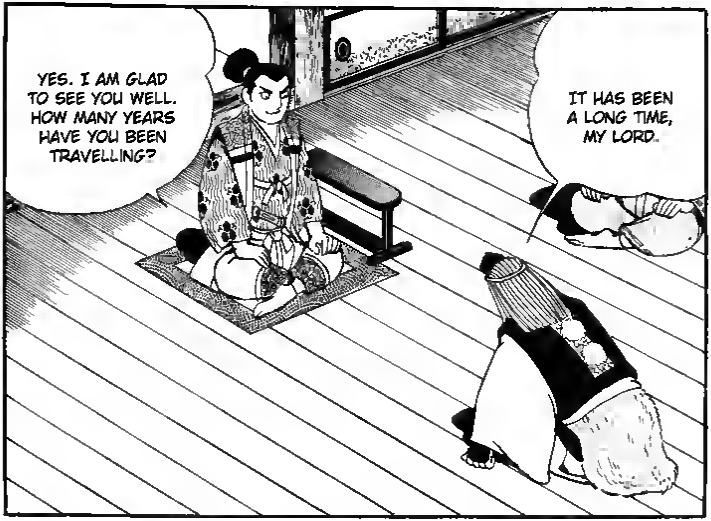
Chapter 23: Guns and a Slight Fever



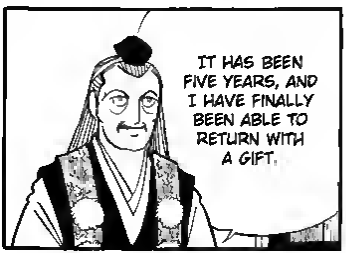
I AM HINATA SABURO-SHIRO.
HALT! WHO GOES THERE?
YES, SIR.
PLEASE INFORM KOMAI KOHAKUSAI THAT HINATA HAS RETURNED...
TSUTSUJI-GA-SAKI HAS CHANGED ENTIRELY. I CAN EVEN HEAR LAUGHTER.

IT HAS BEEN QUITE SOME TIME.
OHH, SIR HINATA!
OUR MASTER REJOICED WHEN HE HEARD THAT SIR HINATA HAS RETURNED.
I HAVE FINALLY RETURNED WITH A GIFT.
I ONLY HOPE HE WILL REJOICE AT MY GIFT.
NOW, COME RIGHT INSIDE. THE MASTER DESIRES TO SPEAK WITH YOU.




IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME, MY LORD.
YES. I AM GLAD TO SEE YOU WELL. HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN TRAVELLING?

OH? AND WHAT DID YOU BRING ME?


IT HAS BEEN FIVE YEARS, AND I HAVE FINALLY BEEN ABLE TO RETURN WITH A GIFT.

WHAT? PLANS FOR RIFLES!?
I HAVE OBTAINED PLANS FOR RIFLES.
ARE RIFLES THAT GREAT AN ASSET?
RIFLES HAVE BEEN SPREADING AT AN ALARMING RATE SINCE THEIR INTRODUCTION IN TENBUN YEAR 11 (1542). EVERY LORD HAS BEEN BUYING RIFLES REGARDLESS OF THE COST.
YES, MY LORD. SOON, HE WHO CONTROLS THE MOST RIFLES WILL CONTROL OUR NATION.
AND HOW ABOUT THE GUNPOWDER?
BUT RIFLES ARE NOT THAT EASY TO OBTAIN, AND THE LORDS ARE BECOMING DESPERATE TO MANUFACTURE THEM THEMSELVES.

SO WE MUST RELY ON THOSE OVERSEAS?
SULFUR CAN BE OBTAINED IN OUR NATION, BUT THERE IS NO WAY TO OBTAIN SALTPETER WITHOUT IMPORTING IT. AS LITTLE LEAD FOR BULLETS IS PRODUCED IN OUR NATION, WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO RELY ON BARBARIAN IMPORTS.
あうう
THEN WHAT SHALL WE DO?
BUT THESE WEAPONS WILL EVENTUALLY CHANGE THE COURSE OF WAR.
I BELIEVE WE MUST BEGIN MANUFACTURING RIFLES AND BUYING AS MUCH AMMUNITION AND POWDER AS WE CAN. AND THESE ARE THE PLANS.

THAT IS WHY I HAVE BROUGHT AN EXPERT ON RIFLES FROM KII.
むうう
HMM... BUT WE CANNOT MAKE THEM WITH PLANS ALONE
THIS MAN IS BUNZAEMON, AN APPRENTICE OF THE BLACKSMITH SHIBATSUJI SEIEMON AT THE FOOT OF NEGORO TEMPLE.
YES, AS LONG AS I HAVE THE PROPER MATERIALS.
CAN YOU MAKE RIFLES?
GOOD-QUALITY IRON FOR THE BARREL. THIS NEEDS TO BE EITHER BARBARIAN IRON, OR REFINED IRON FROM BINGO, BICCHU, MIMASAKA, OR AKI.
WHAT ARE THE MATERIALS?

YES, MY LORD!
UNDERSTOOD. I SHALL PREPARE THE MATERIALS FOR YOU. GET TO WORK ON PRODUCING RIFLES IMMEDIATELY. YOU MAY NOW TAKE THE NAME OF HINATA BUNSAI.
NO... I AM GRATEFUL ENOUGH THAT YOU APPRECIATE MY GIFT.
HINATA SABUROSHIRO, I COMMEND YOU ON YOUR YEARS OF TOIL
YES, MY LORD!
YOUR MERIT OF BRINGING RIFLES TO KAI IS GREATER THAN THE HEADS OF A HUNDRED GENERALS. I WANT YOU TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, AND WORK FOR ME AS THE MAGISTRATE OF RIFLES

YES, MY LORD.
KOHAKUSAI, SUMMON YAMAMOTO KANSUKE.

Harunobu had been developing a cough, and come the afternoon, he had a slight fever.
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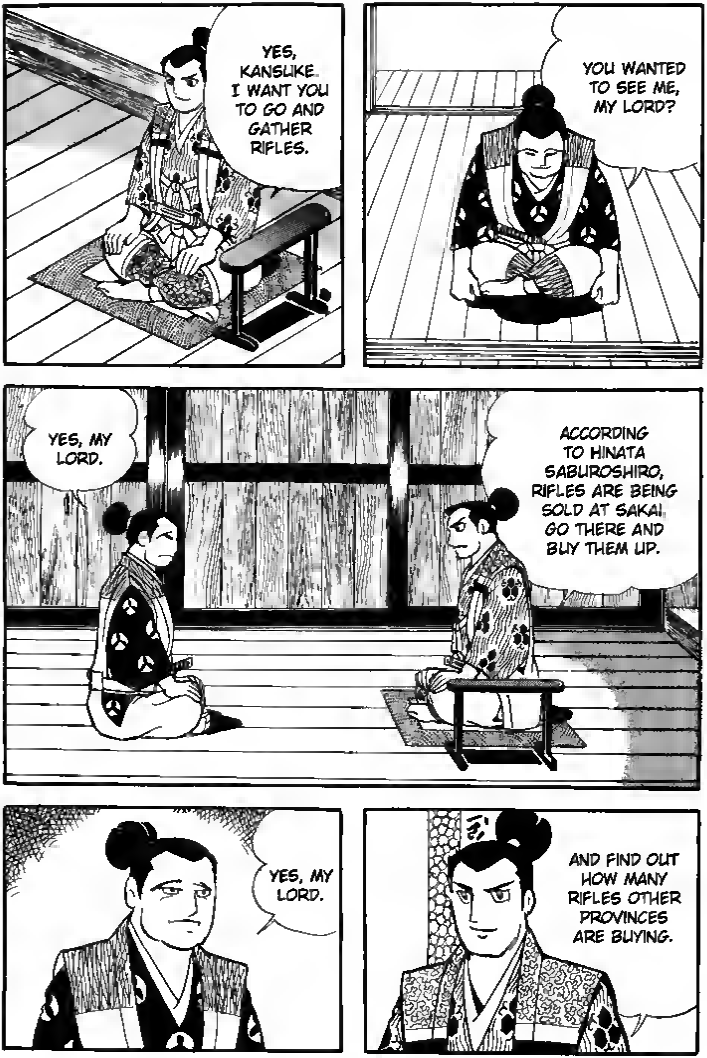
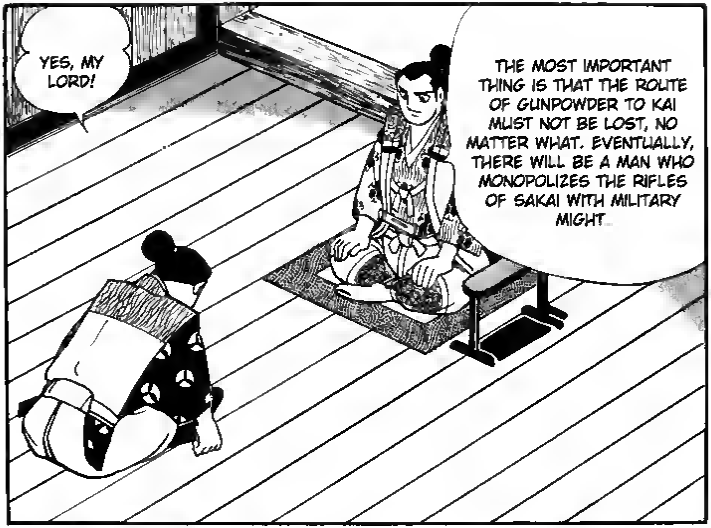

YES, KANSUKE. I WANT YOU TO GO AND GATHER RIFLES.
YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, MY LORD?
YES, MY LORD.
ACCORDING TO HINATA SABUROSHIRO, RIFLES ARE BEING SOLD AT SAKAI. GO THERE AND BUY THEM UP.
YES, MY LORD.
AND FIND OUT HOW MANY RIFLES OTHER PROVINCES ARE BUYING.


YES, MY LORD!
THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THE ROUTE OF GUNPOWDER TO KAI MUST NOT BE LOST, NO MATTER WHAT. EVENTUALLY, THERE WILL BE A MAN WHO MONOPOLIZES THE RIFLES OF SAKAI WITH MILITARY MIGHT

Yamamoto Kansuke left Kai within the day.

Itagaki Nobukata came from Suwa.
A few days later...
WELL? HAVE SUWA AND INA BEEN SUBDUED?
YES, MY LORD. FOR NOW...
THERE ARE SIGNS OF A REBELLION IN A PART OF SUWA, BUT IT IS NO CAUSE FOR YOUR CONCERN.

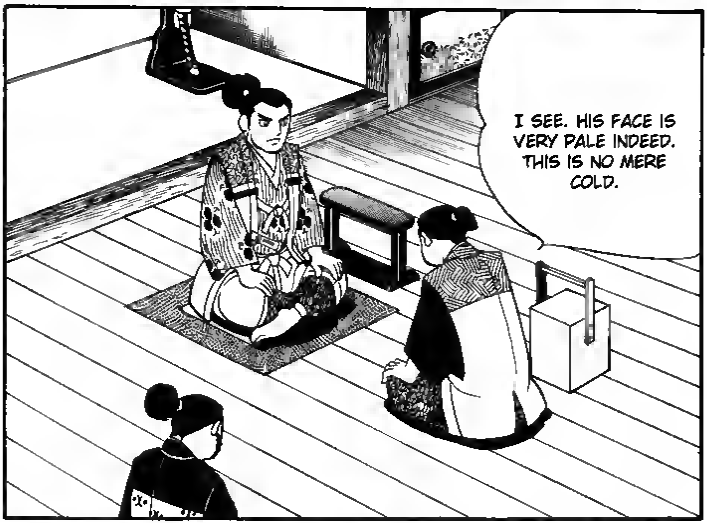
IT'S JUST ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER...
ゴだゴだゴだ
MY LORD, I HAD NOTICED THAT YOUR FACE IS VERY PALE. ARE YOU NOT FEELING WELL?
DO NOT WORRY. I HAVE SIMPLY CAUGHT A COLD.
ALLOW ME TO HAVE A DOCTOR LOOK AT YOU.
I SAID DO NOT WORRY. IT IS ONLY A SLIGHT COLD.

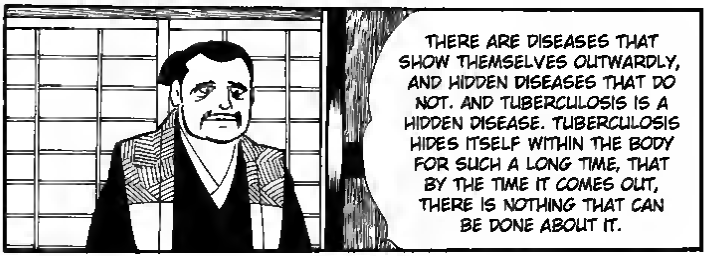
I KNOW! I'LL GO ASK LADY SATOMI!
HMM...
IS LADY SATOMI HERE? THIS IS ITAGAKI.

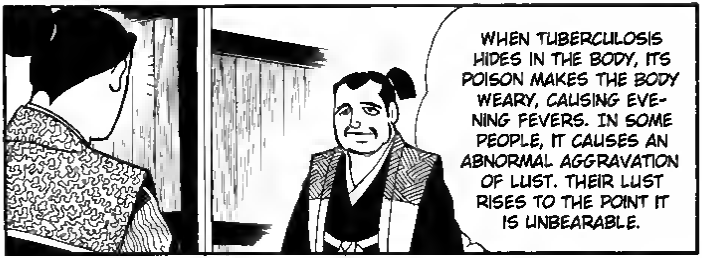
THERE IS SOMETHING I WISH TO ASK YOU, LADY SATOMI...
I HAVE JUST ARRIVED TODAY.
OH, SIR ITAGAKI! WHEN DID YOU GET HERE?
IT IS ABOUT THE MASTER'S CONDITION. HIS COMPLEXION IS NOT GOOD. HAVE YOU NOTICED ANYTHING?
AND WHAT MIGHT THAT BE?
THE MASTER'S BODY DOES NOT BELONG TO HIM ALONE, BUT TO KAI. IF ANYTHING WERE TO BECOME OF HIM, REBELLIONS WOULD BREAK OUT.
YOU ARE THE ONE WHO WAITS ON HIM HAND AND FOOT. IF YOU HAVE NOTICED SOMETHING, TELL ME.

SINCE WHEN?
YES, SIR. THE MASTER BREAKS OUT IN A SLIGHT FEVER COME AFTERNOON, AND HE HAS A LIGHT COUGH...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN...?
ANYTHING ELSE?
FOR A FEW MONTHS NOW.
A FEW MONTHS... THIS IS HARDLY A SLIGHT COLD.
MY!
IS HE STRANGELY VIOLENT IN BED?

THE SYMPTOMS OF THE TUBERCULOSIS THAT PLAGUED LADY KOKO.
WHAT ARE THESE SYMPTOMS?
I KNOW THIS IS VERY RUDE OF ME TO ASK, BUT THESE SYMPTOMS ARE SIMILAR TO WHAT I HEARD FROM SENGEN THE DOCTOR LONG AGO.
YES, SIR.
I KNOW IT MAY BE SHAMEFUL, BUT TELL ME ANYTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY.
AND THOSE TIMES, HE LOVES ME VERY VIOLENTLY...
THERE ARE TIMES WHEN THE MASTER'S BODY IS HOT, ALMOST LIKE ANOTHER MAN...
IS IT TUBERCULOSIS?
I SEE. THEN I MUST HAVE TACHIKI SENGEN EXAMINE HIM IMMEDIATELY...


I SEE. HIS FACE IS VERY PALE INDEED. THIS IS NO MERE COLD.


THERE ARE DISEASES THAT SHOW THEMSELVES OUTWARDLY, AND HIDDEN DISEASES THAT DO NOT. AND TUBERCULOSIS IS A HIDDEN DISEASE. TUBERCULOSIS HIDES ITSELF WITHIN THE BODY FOR SUCH A LONG TIME, THAT BY THE TIME IT COMES OUT, THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT.

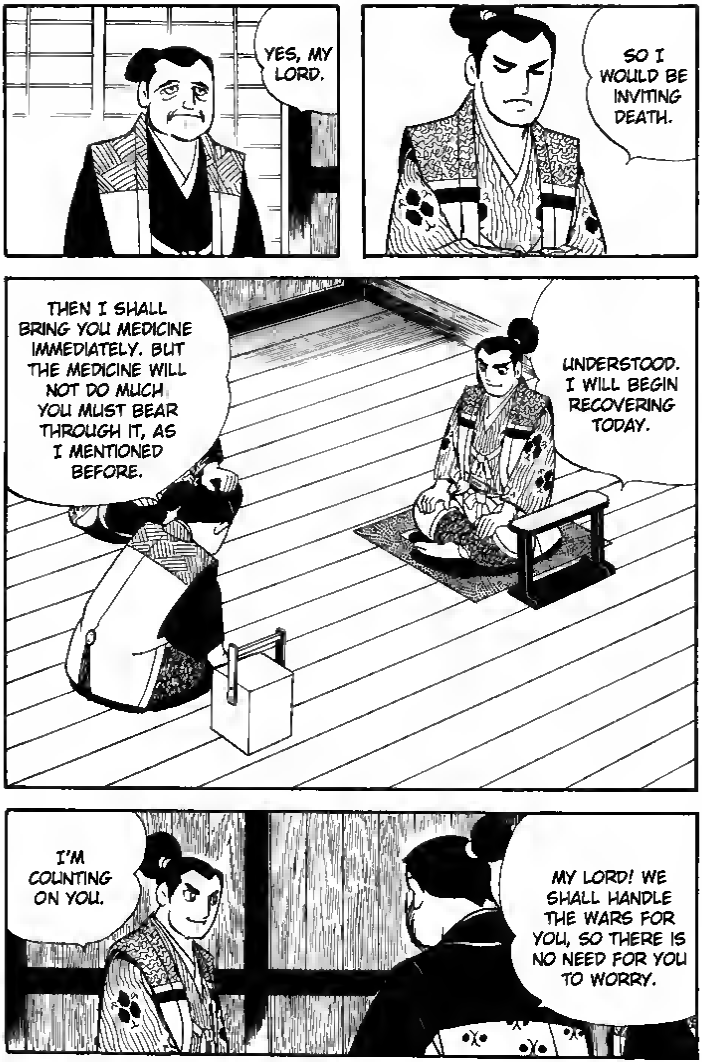

WHEN TUBERCULOSIS HIDES IN THE BODY, ITS POISON MAKES THE BODY WEARY, CAUSING EVENING FEVERS. IN SOME PEOPLE, IT CAUSES AN ABNORMAL AGGRAVATION OF LUST. THEIR LUST RISES TO THE POINT IT IS UNBEARABLE.

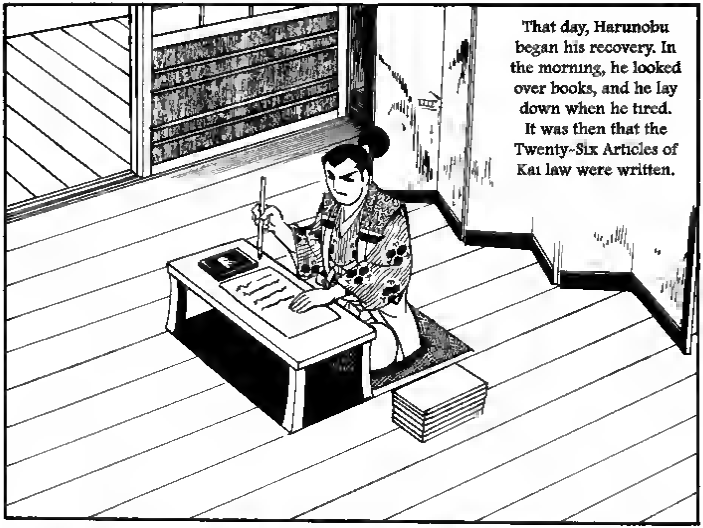
These all perfectly described Harunobu's condition.
AND THE WASTE OF VITALITY SPURS ON THE BODY'S CONSUMPTION.

NO, MY LORD. I WOULD JUST CONSIDER IT CONCERNING IF THOSE SIGNS SHOWED UP.

ARE YOU DIAGNOSING ME WITH TUBERCULOSIS?

SO IT IS AS I FEARED...
HMM... I CANNOT SAY THOSE SIGNS HAVE BEEN ABSENT.
THERE IS NO WAY BUT TO SUFFER THROUGH IT. YOU MUST ABSTAIN FROM GOING TO WAR, RIDING ON HORSEBACK, AND RELATIONS IN THE BEDROOM.
WHAT MUST I DO?
I CANNOT ABSTAIN FROM ANY OF THOSE. WHAT IF I DO NOT ABSTAIN?
THERE IS NO MEDICINE BUT TO CALM YOUR HEART, EAT GOOD FOOD, AND BE AT REST.
THEN YOU WILL BE INVITING DEATH. YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST ABSTAIN.


YES, MY LORD.
SO I WOULD BE INVITING DEATH.
THEN I SHALL BRING YOU MEDICINE IMMEDIATELY. BUT THE MEDICINE WILL NOT DO MUCH YOU MUST BEAR THROUGH IT, AS I MENTIONED BEFORE.
UNDERSTOOD. I WILL BEGIN RECOVERING TODAY.
I'M COUNTING ON YOU.
MY LORD! WE SHALL HANDLE THE WARS FOR YOU, SO THERE IS NO NEED FOR YOU TO WORRY.


That day, Harunobu began his recovery. In the morning, he looked over books, and he lay down when he tired. It was then that the Twenty-Six Articles of Kai law were written.

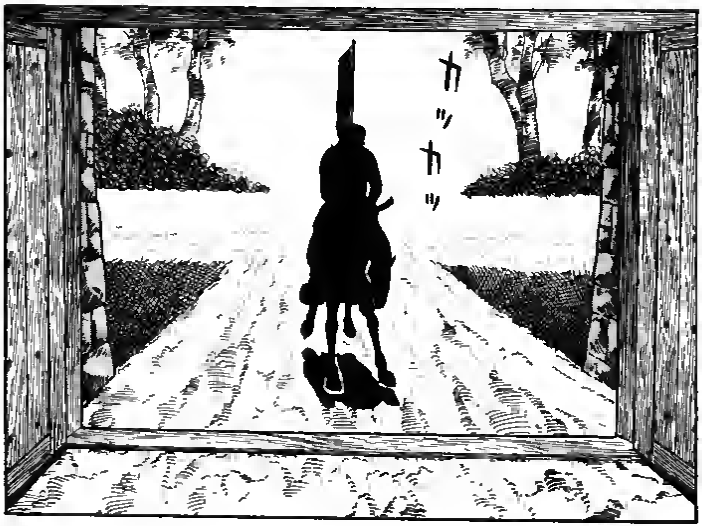
In no time, rumors of Harunobu's illness spread to neighboring provinces, and the lords began making subtle movements.

TAKEDA SHINGEN

TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

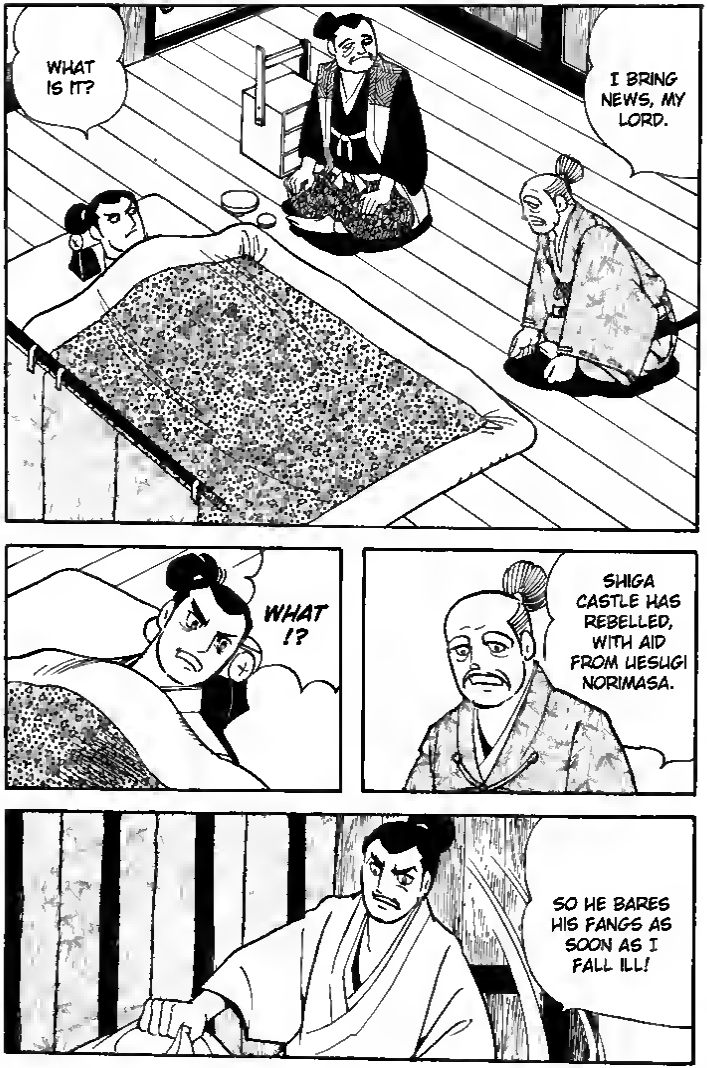
CHAPTER 23

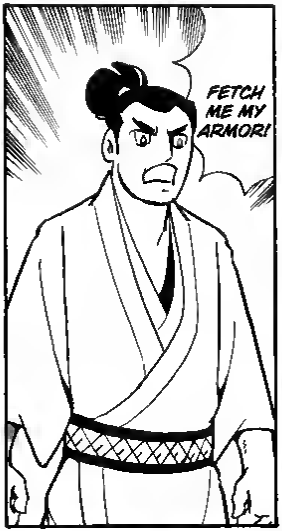
Chapter 24: Siege of Shiga Castle



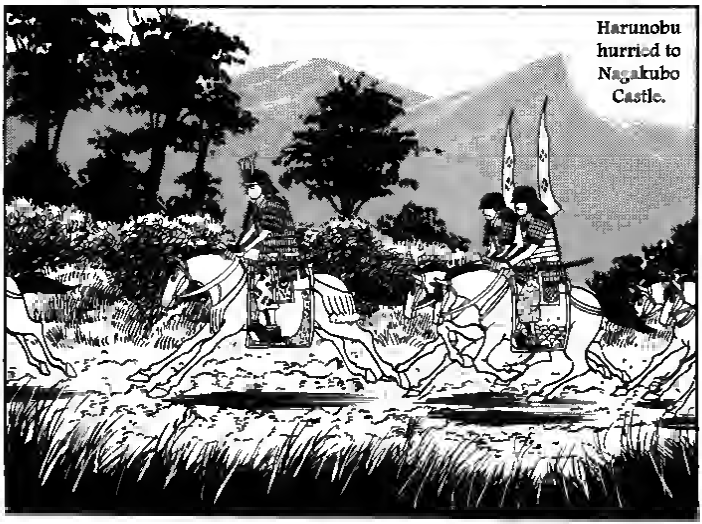
I AM A MESSENGER OF SANADA!
KASAHARA KIYOSHIGE OF SHIGA CASTLE HAS JOINED WITH UESUGI NORIMASA OF KOZUKE AND STARTED A REBELLION!
YES, WHAT IS IT?
JUST OVER FIVE HUNDRED AT SHIGA CASTLE, INCLUDING REINFORCEMENTS FROM KOZUKE!
HOW POWERFUL IS THE ENEMY?

YES, SIR!
UNDERSTOOD. TELL SIR SANADA TO DO WHATEVER HE CAN.
AND UESUGI NORIMASA'S ARMY HAS SET UP CAMP AT OTAI PLAIN, AT THE FOOT OF MT. ASAMA! THEY NUMBER THREE THOUSAND!


WHAT IS IT?
I BRING NEWS, MY LORD.
WHAT!?
SHIGA CASTLE HAS REBELLED, WITH AID FROM HESUGI NORIMASA.
SO HE BARES HIS FANGS AS SOON AS I FALL ILL!


FETCH ME MY ARMOR!

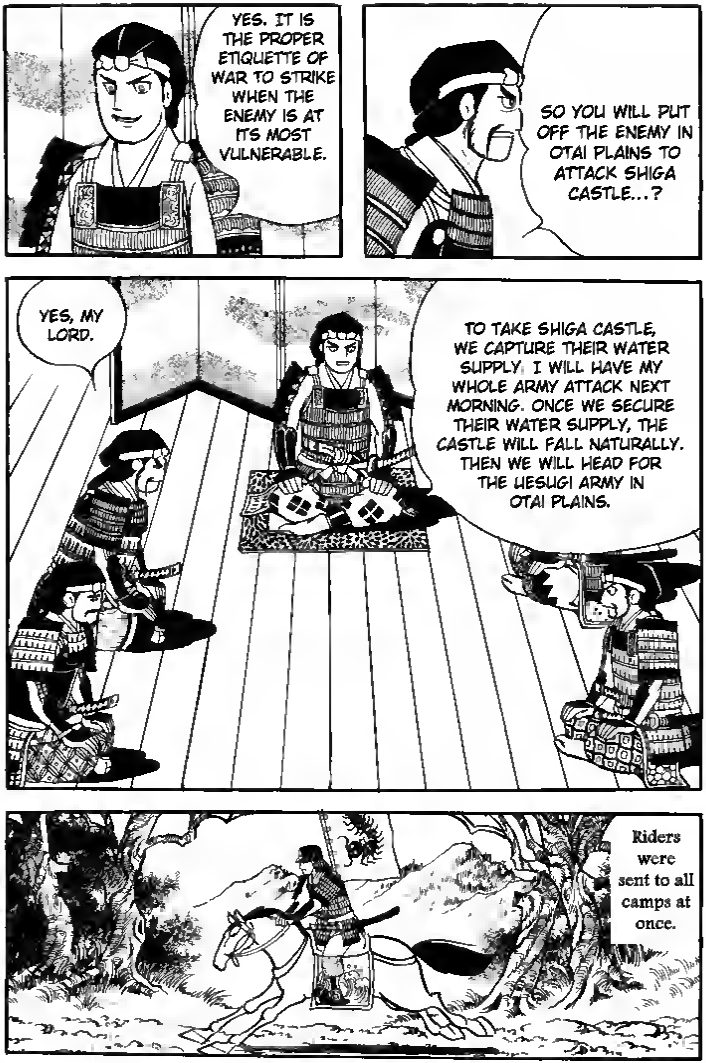
SENGEN, IF I SHOULD FALL TO A FOE WITHIN ME, I SHALL ACCEPT THAT AS FATE. BUT I WILL NOT FALL TO A HUMAN FOE!

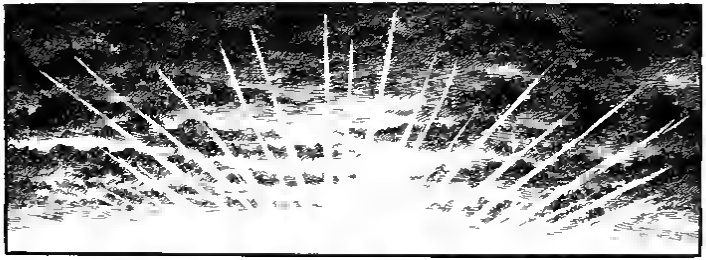

Harunobu hurried to Nagakubo Castle.

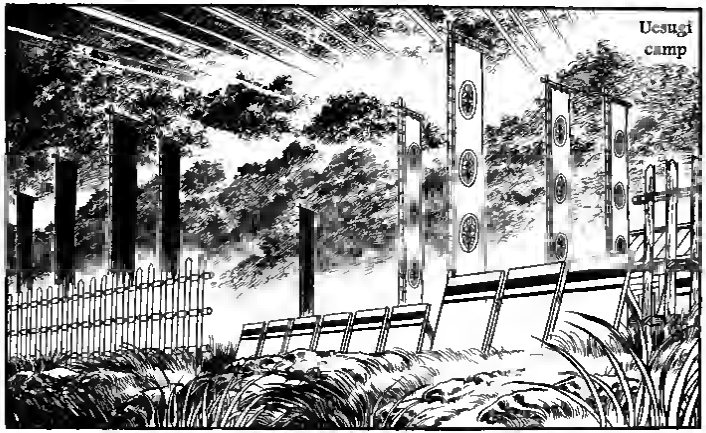
Nagakubo Castle
WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION, ITAGAKI?
YES, MY LORD.

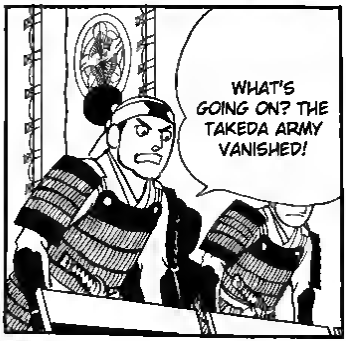
AND YOKOTA BICCHU-NO-KAMI AND TADA SANBACHI ARE HEADED FOR SHIGA CASTLE.
TENKYU NOBUSHIGE HAS SET UP CAMP TO OPPOSE HIM, WITH MY ARMY AND AMARI TORIYASU'S ARMY.
UESUGI NORIMASA HAS NOT COME IN PERSON, AND HAS INSTEAD SENT KANAI HIDEKAGE AS HIS GENERAL, WHO HAS SET UP CAMP IN OTAI PLAINS.
HE IS TAKING SHELTER IN IWAO CASTLE OF TAKASE, RIGHT NEXT TO OTAI PLAINS.
AND WHAT IS SANADA YUKITAKA DOING?
ABOUT THREE HUNDRED.
WITH HOW MANY MEN?

SIR SANADA YUKITAKA SHOULD BE ABLE TO HOLD THE CASTLE NOT JUST FOR TEN DAYS, BUT TWENTY.
CAN THEY HOLD OUT FOR TEN DAYS?
YES, MY LORD?
SIR NEZU.
HMM...
I WANT YOU TO BRING RATIONS AND ARROWS TO IWAO CASTLE, WHERE SANADA YUKITAKA IS DEFENDING. IF THEY HAVE ENOUGH RATIONS AND ARROWS, IWAO CASTLE WILL LAST FOR TWENTY DAYS.

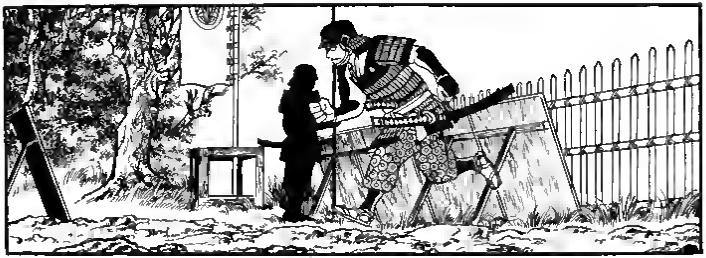

YES. IT IS THE PROPER ETIQUETTE OF WAR TO STRIKE WHEN THE ENEMY IS AT ITS MOST VULNERABLE.
SO YOU WILL PUT OFF THE ENEMY IN OTAI PLAINS TO ATTACK SHIGA CASTLE...?
YES, MY LORD.
TO TAKE SHIGA CASTLE, WE CAPTURE THEIR WATER SUPPLY. I WILL HAVE MY WHOLE ARMY ATTACK NEXT MORNING. ONCE WE SECURE THEIR WATER SUPPLY, THE CASTLE WILL FALL NATURALLY. THEN WE WILL HEAD FOR THE UESUGI ARMY IN OTAI PLAINS.
Riders were sent to all camps at once.




Uesugi
camp


WHAT'S GOING ON? THE TAKEDA ARMY VANISHED!

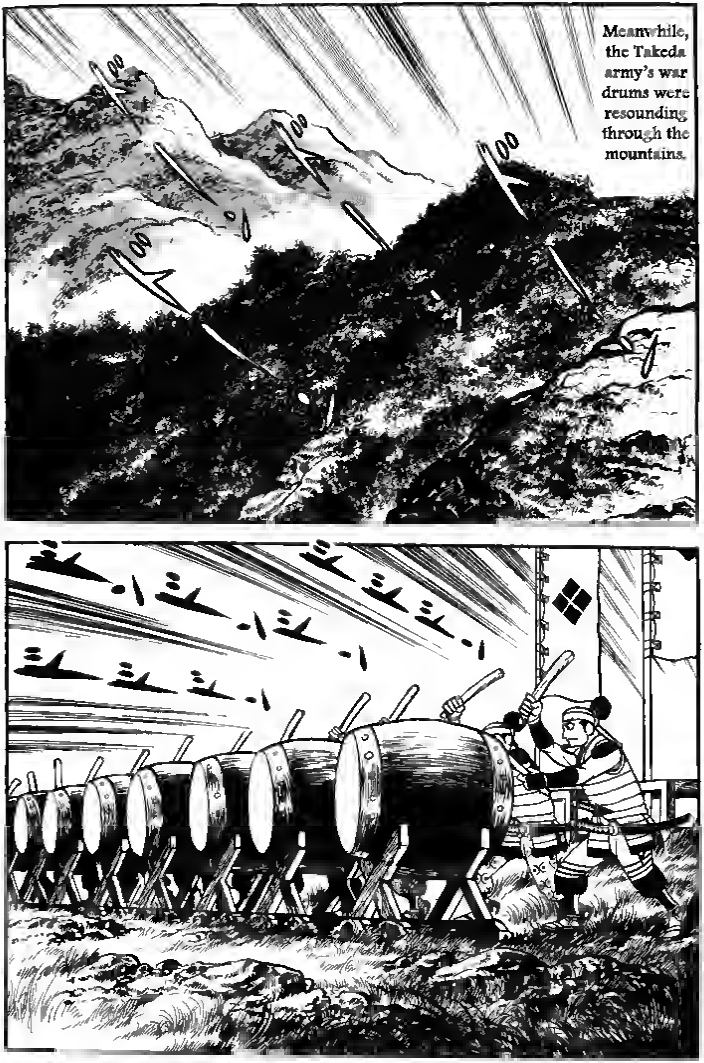
HUH?

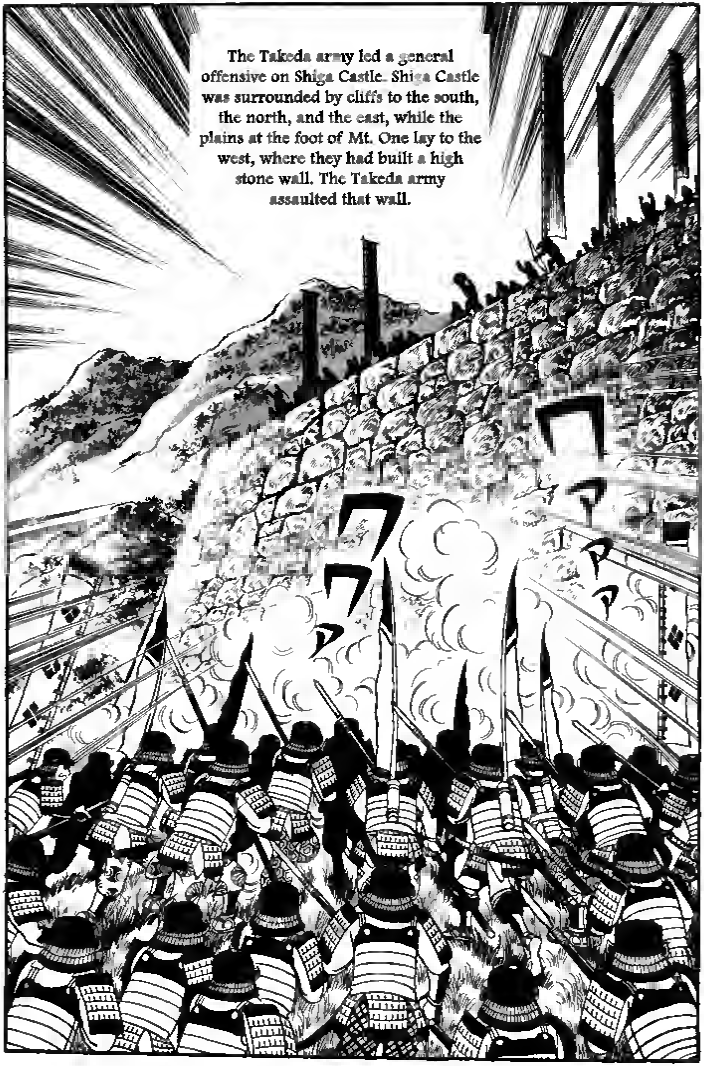


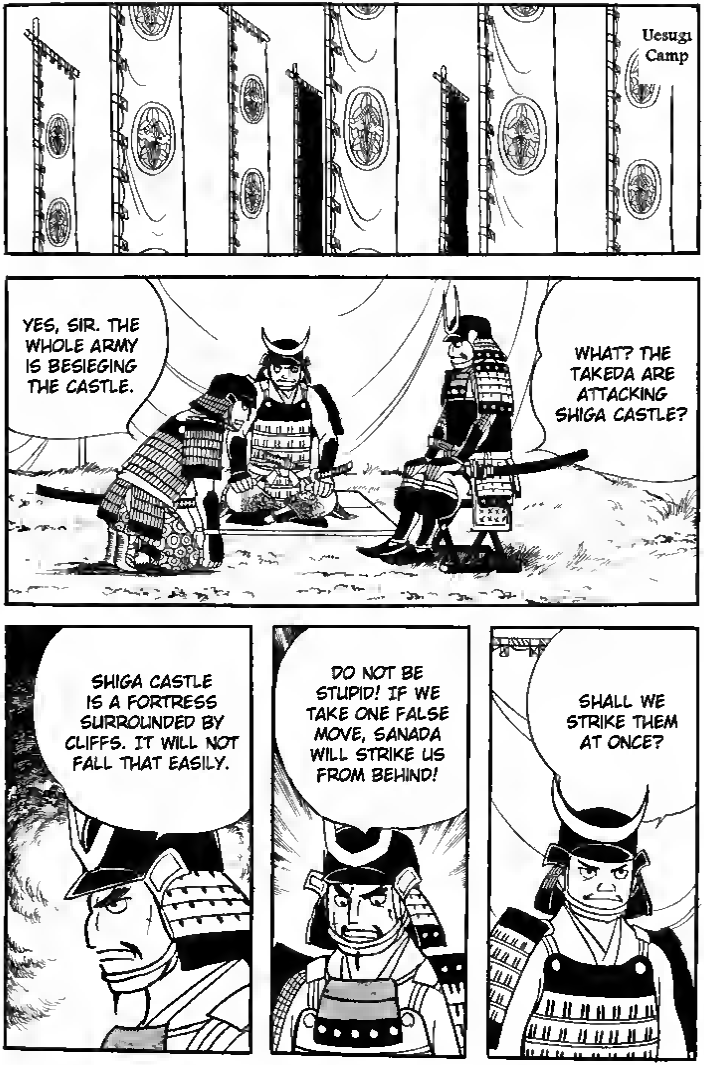
THAT GODDAMN HARUNOBU MUST HAVE SOME TRICK UP HIS SLEEVES...

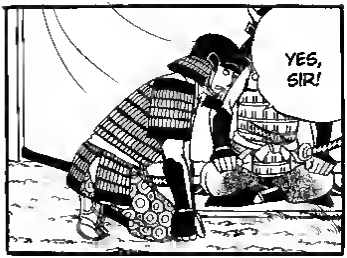
WHAT!?
REPORTING IN! THE TAKEDA ARMY IS GONE!

YES, SIR!
SEND SCOUTS TO INVESTIGATE AT ONCE!

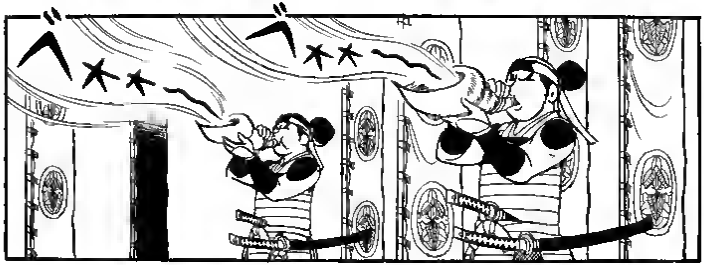

Meanwhile, the Takeda army's war drums were resounding through the mountains.

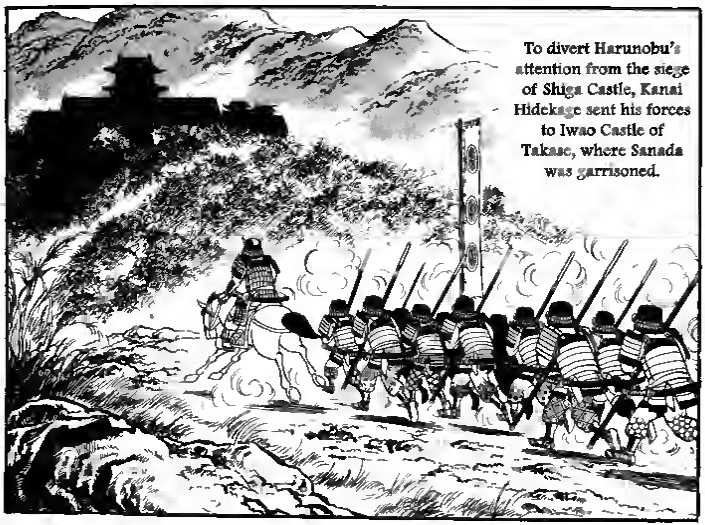

The Takeda army led a general offensive on Shiga Castle. Shiga Castle was surrounded by cliffs to the south, the north, and the east, while the plains at the foot of Mt. One lay to the west, where they had built a high stone wall. The Takeda army assaulted that wall.

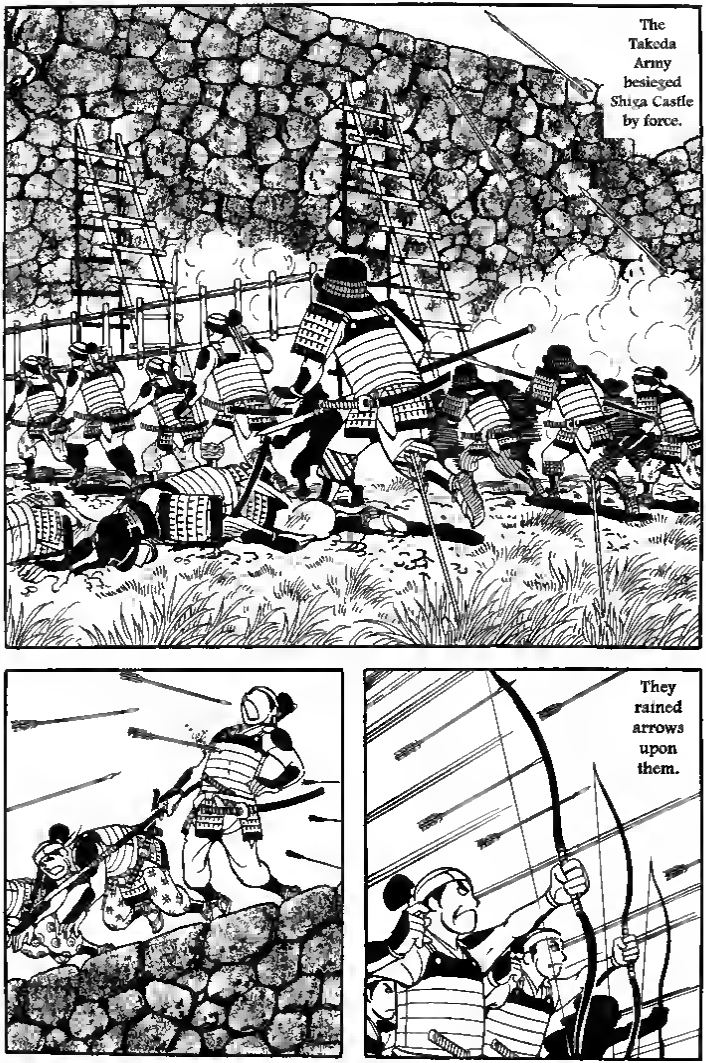

Uesugi Camp
YES, SIR. THE WHOLE ARMY IS BESIEGING THE CASTLE.
WHAT? THE TAKEDA ARE ATTACKING SHIGA CASTLE?
SHIGA CASTLE IS A FORTRESS SURROUNDED BY CLIFFS. IT WILL NOT FALL THAT EASILY.
DO NOT BE STUPID! IF WE TAKE ONE FALSE MOVE, SANADA WILL STRIKE US FROM BEHIND!
SHALL WE STRIKE THEM AT ONCE?

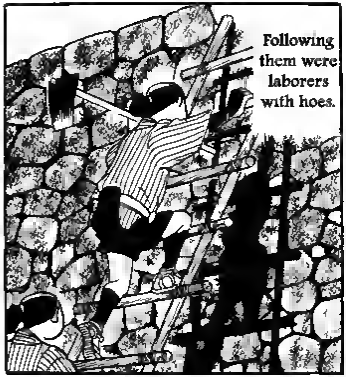

YES, SIR!

IN THE MEANTIME, WE MUST BRING DOWN SANADA'S CASTLE!

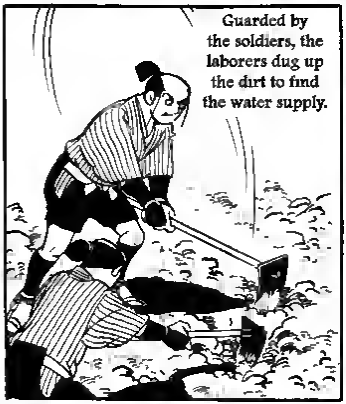



To divert Harunobu's attention from the siege of Shiga Castle, Kanai Hidekage sent his forces to Iwao Castle of Takasc, where Sanada was garrisoned.

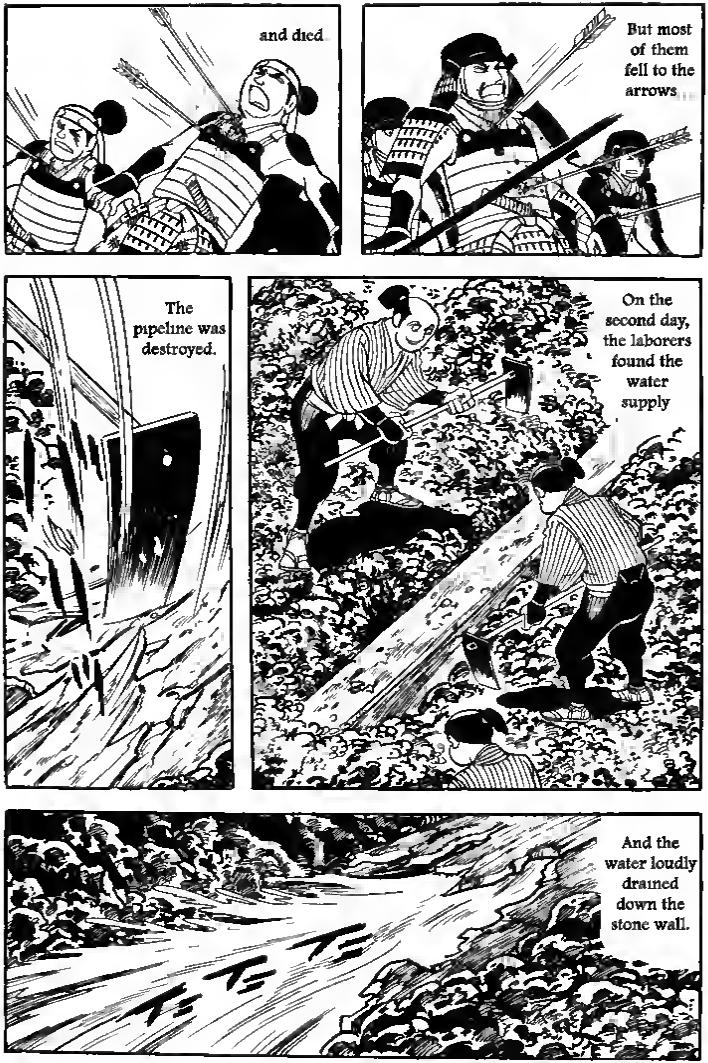

The Takeda Army besieged Shiga Castle by force.
They rained arrows upon them.


Following them were laborers with hoes.

They set up ladders and climbed the stone wall.


Guarded by the soldiers, the laborers dug up the dirt to find the water supply.

When they saw this, the castle soldiers launched a desperate counterattack.


and died.
But most of them fell to the arrows.
The pipeline was destroyed.
On the second day, the laborers found the water supply
And the water loudly drained down the stone wall.

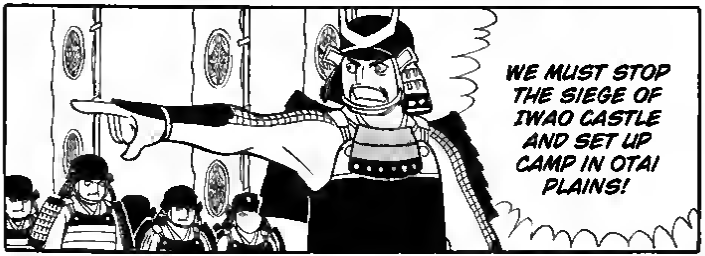
オーー
オーー
オー
WE HAVE THEIR WATER!
GOOD.
MY LORD, WE HAVE CUT OFF THEIR WATER SUPPLY.
YES, MY LORD?
TADA SANHACHI.

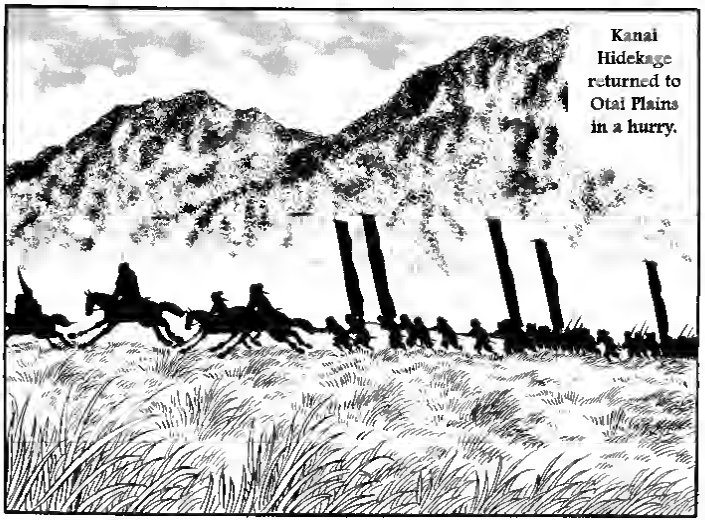
YES, MY LORD.
SURROUND THIS CASTLE WITH FIVE HUNDRED OF YOUR MEN.
THE REST OF THE ARMY WILL MARCH ON OTAI PLAINS!
YES, MY LORD.

WHAT!?
REPORTING IN! THE TAKEDA ARMY IS HEADED THIS WAY!
HAS SHIGA CASTLE FALLEN?

?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND! THEN WHY HAVE THEY TURNED BACK?

NO, THERE ARE NO SIGNS THAT IT HAS FALLEN.


WE MUST STOP THE SIEGE OF IWAO CASTLE AND SET UP CAMP IN OTAI PLAINS!

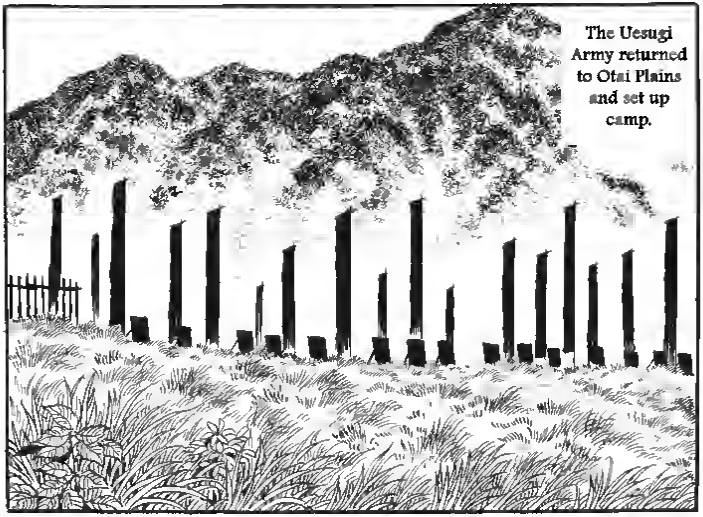

Kanai Hidekage returned to Otai Plains in a hurry.

TAKEDA SHINGEN

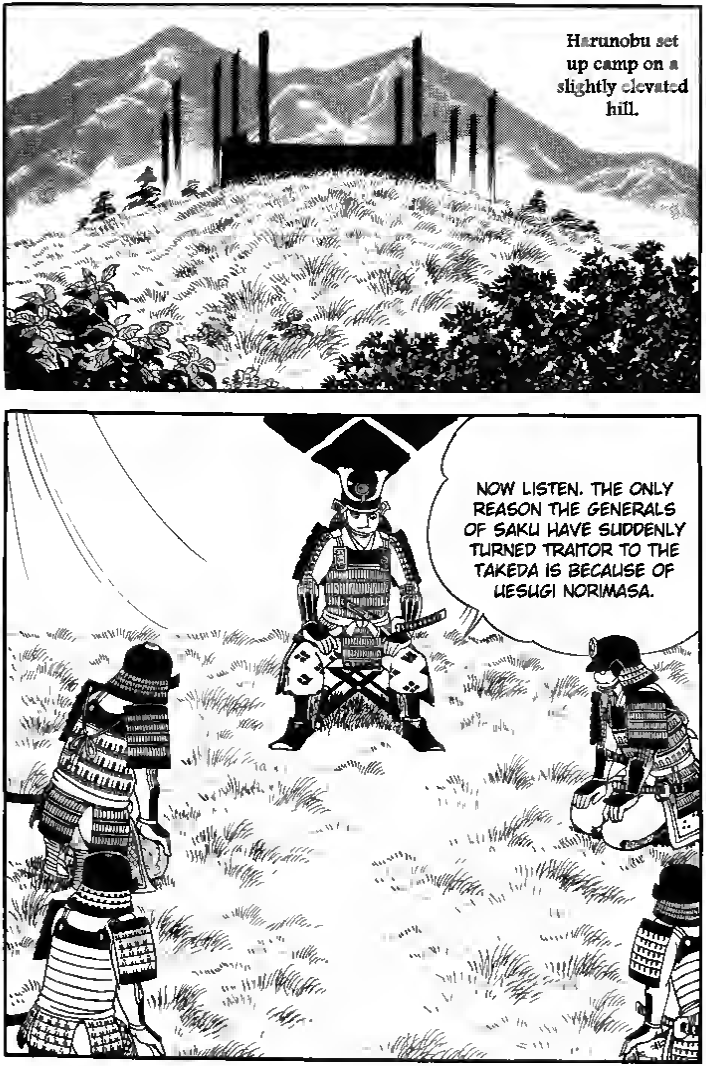
TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

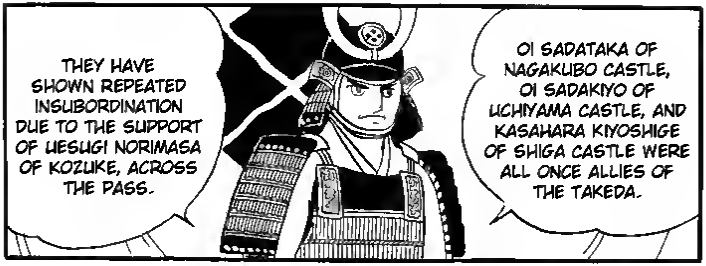
CHAPTER 24

Chapter 25: Three Thousand Severed Heads

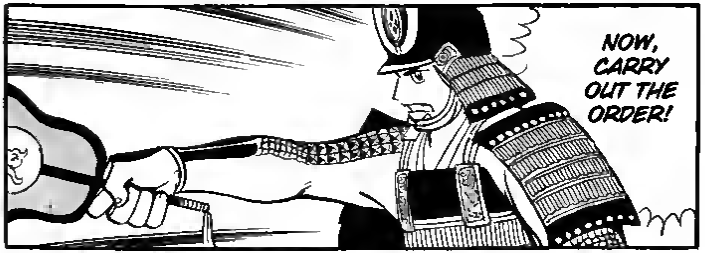


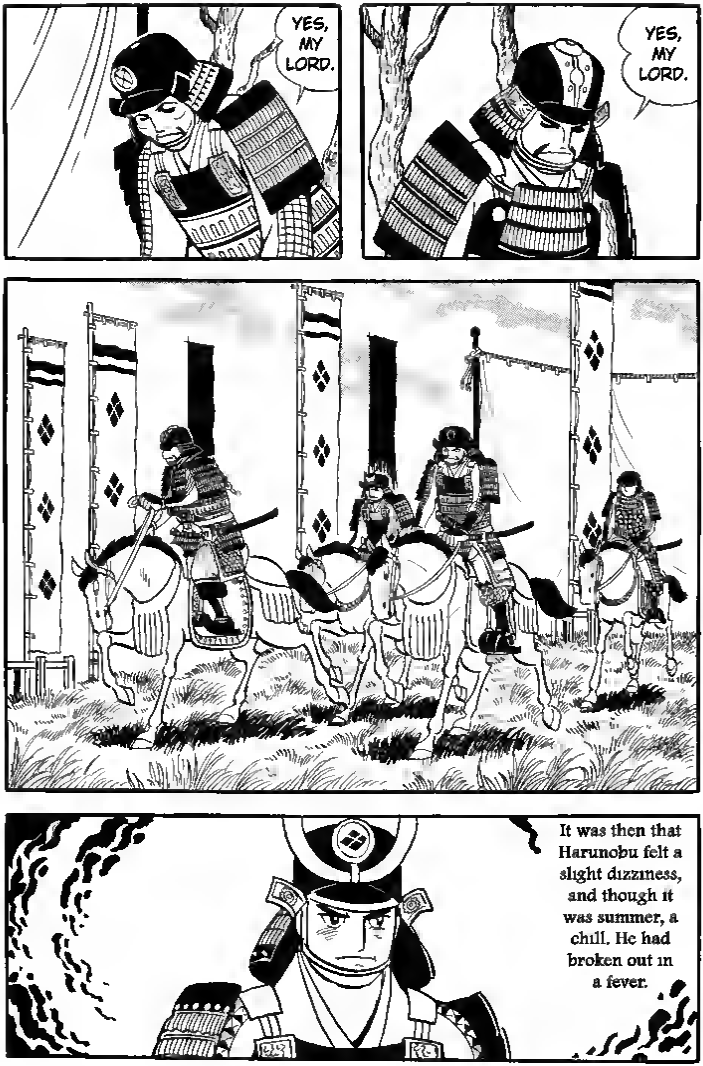
THEY EVEN SAY THAT SHIGA CASTLE HAS FALLEN!
BUT IF THEY HAVE USUI PASS, WE HAVE NO ESCAPE ROUTES!
HEY, DID YOU HEAR? RUMOR HAS IT THAT THE TAKEDA ARMY HAS CAPTURED USUI PASS, AND HAS US CORNERED LIKE RATS!
IS THAT TRUE?
The Kozuke army was plagued by unpleasant rumors.

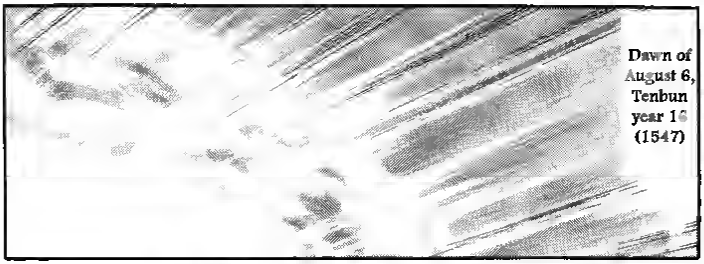

Harunobu set up camp on a slightly elevated hill.
NOW LISTEN. THE ONLY REASON THE GENERALS OF SAKU HAVE SUDDENLY TURNED TRAITOR TO THE TAKEDA IS BECAUSE OF UESUGI NORIMASA.

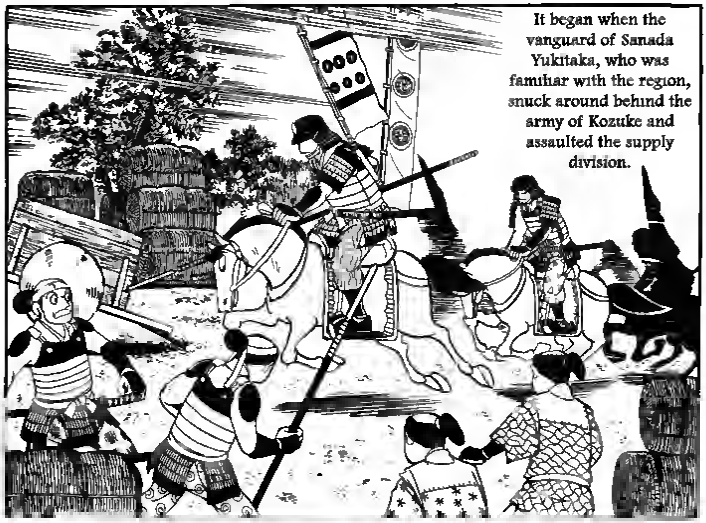

THEY HAVE SHOWN REPEATED INSUBORDINATION DUE TO THE SUPPORT OF UESUGI NORIMASA OF KOZUKE, ACROSS THE PASS.
OI SADATAKA OF NAGAKUBO CASTLE, OI SADAKIYO OF UCHIYAMA CASTLE, AND KASAHARA KIYOSHIGE OF SHIGA CASTLE WERE ALL ONCE ALLIES OF THE TAKEDA.

WE MUST GIVE THE KOZUKE ARMY A HARD BLOW SO THAT UESUGI NORIMASA DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH SAKU ANY LONGER. AND TO DO THAT, WE MUST NOT LET A SINGLE SOLDIER OF KOZUKE ACROSS USUI PASS!

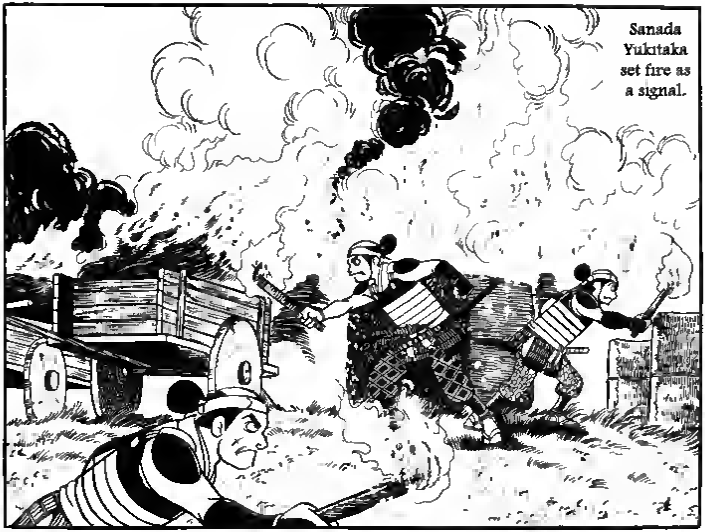

NOW, CARRY OUT THE ORDER!

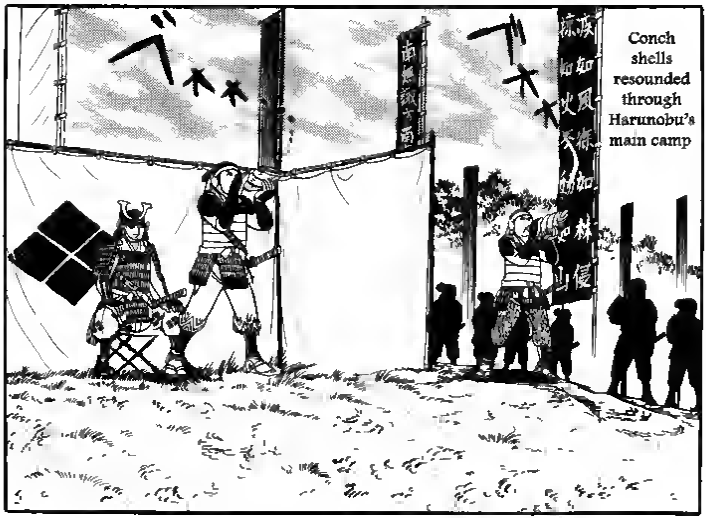

YES, MY LORD.
YES, MY LORD.
It was then that Harunobu felt a slight dizziness, and though it was summer, a chill. He had broken out in a fever.

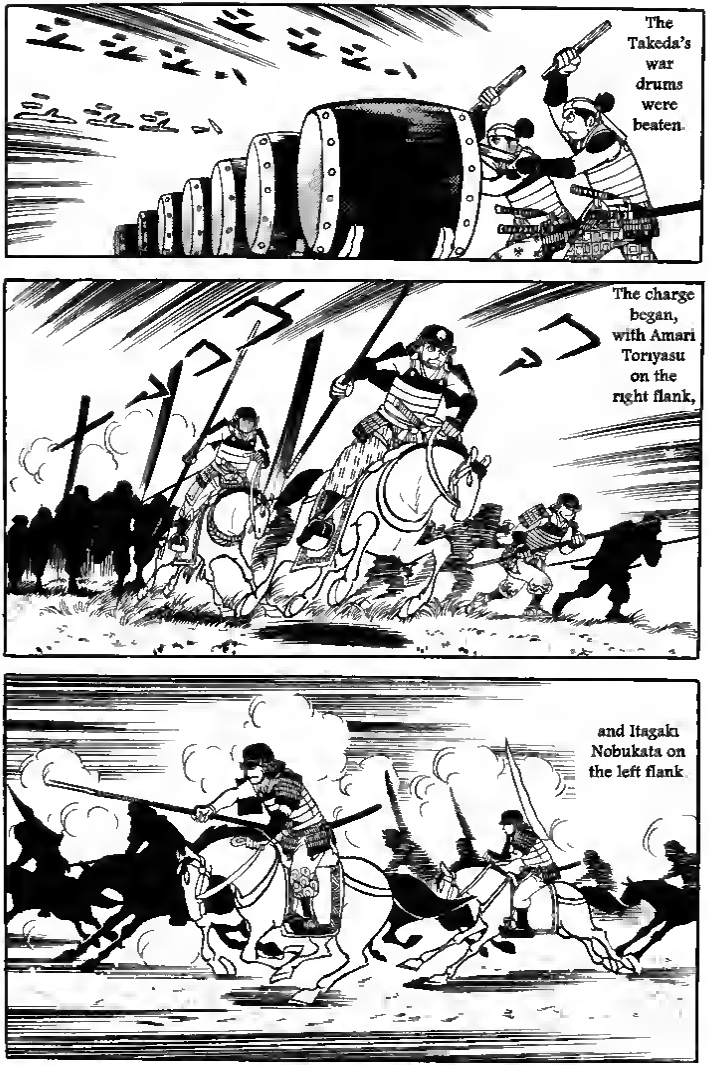

Dawn of August 6, Tenbun year 16 (1547)


It began when the vanguard of Sanada Yukitaka, who was familiar with the region, snuck around behind the army of Kozuke and assaulted the supply division.

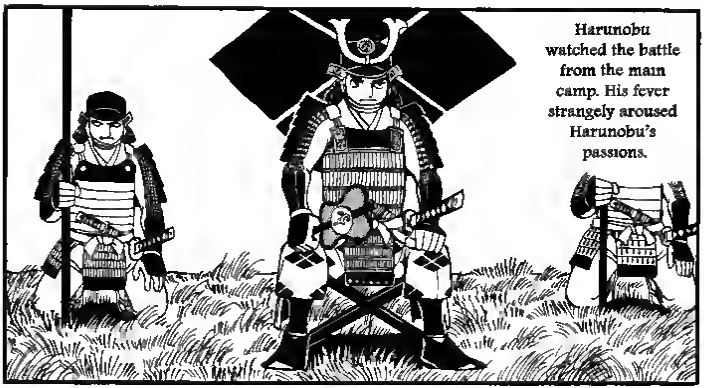
Taken by surprise, the supply division fled to the main camp in disarray.

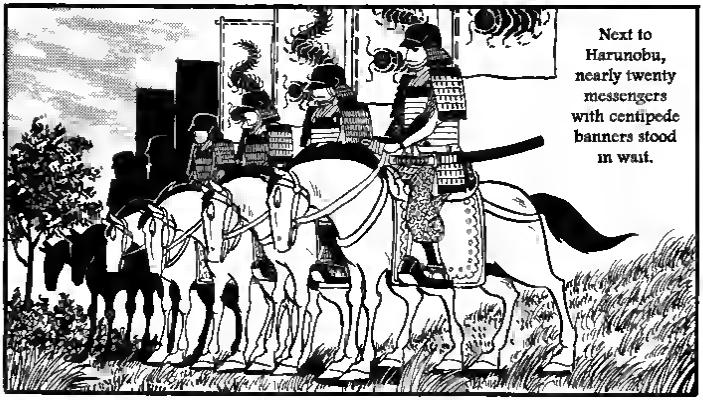

Sanada Yukitaka set fire as a signal.

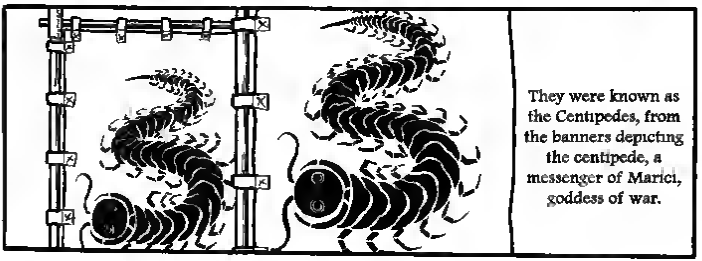

Conch shells resounded through Harunobu's main camp

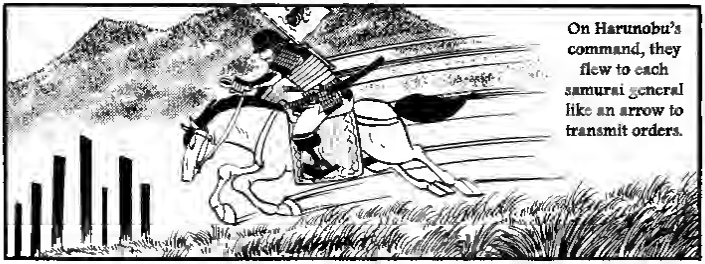

The Takeda's war drums were beaten.
The charge began, with Amari Toriyasu on the right flank,
and Itagaki Nobukata on the left flank

The deadly battle unfolded on Oita Plains.
At the time, merit was based on the number of heads taken.
The weak were beheaded one after another.
Such a tragedy seemed quite common in the age of the Warring States.

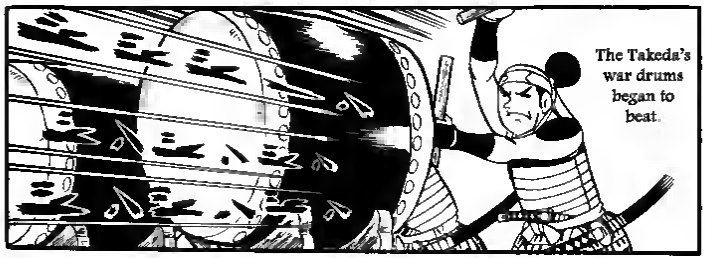

Harunobu watched the battle from the main camp. His fever strangely aroused Harunobu's passions.


Next to Harunobu, nearly twenty messengers with centipede banners stood in wait.


They were known as the Centipedes, from the banners depicting the centipede, a messenger of Marici, goddess of war.

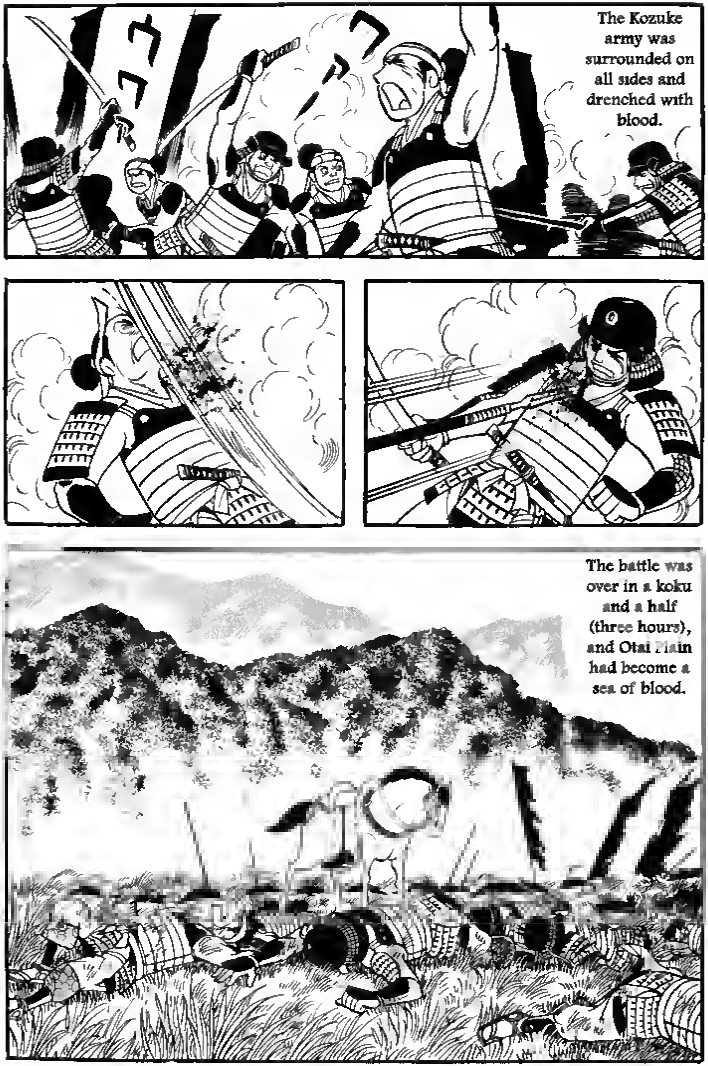

On Harunobu's command, they flew to each samurai general like an arrow to transmit orders.

Flanked on both sides, the Kozuke army was now assaulted by the army of Tenkyu Nobushige from the front.

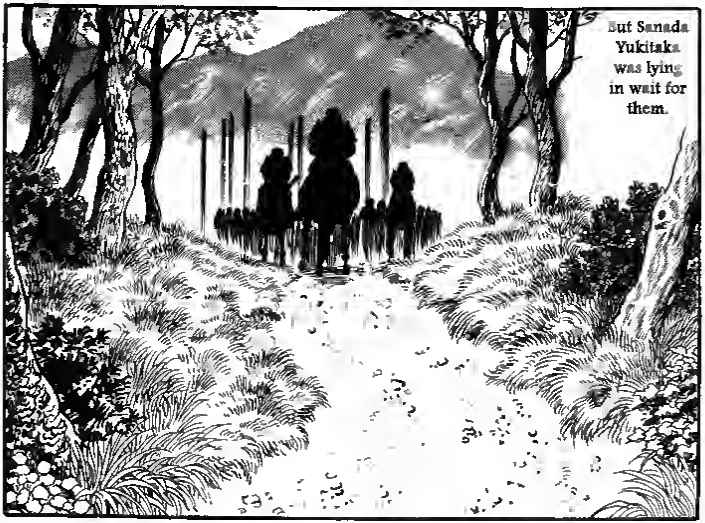

The Takeda's war drums began to beat.

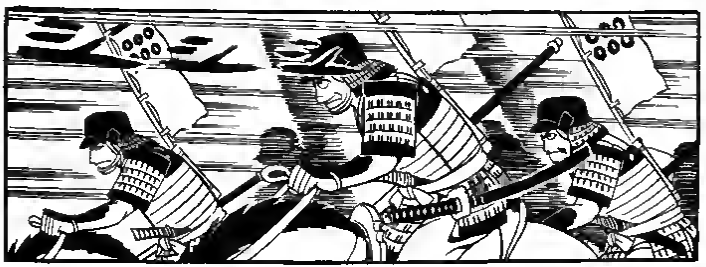
The Kozuke army slowly began to retreat.

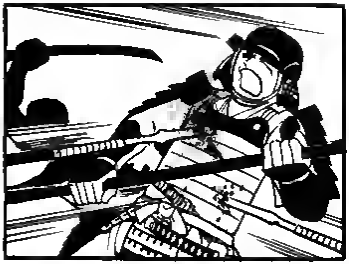
At about the same time, the armyof Yokota Bicchu-no-Kami Takamatsu assaulted the Kozuke army from behind.

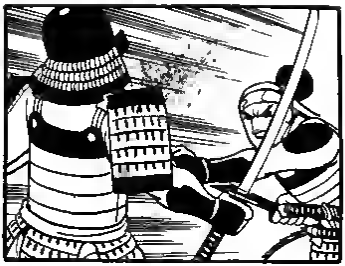

The Kozuke army was surrounded on all sides and drenched with blood.
The battle was over in a koku and a half (three hours), and Otai Plain had become a sea of blood.

The Kozuke army attempted to run to Usui Pass


But Sanada Yukitaka was lying in wait for them.





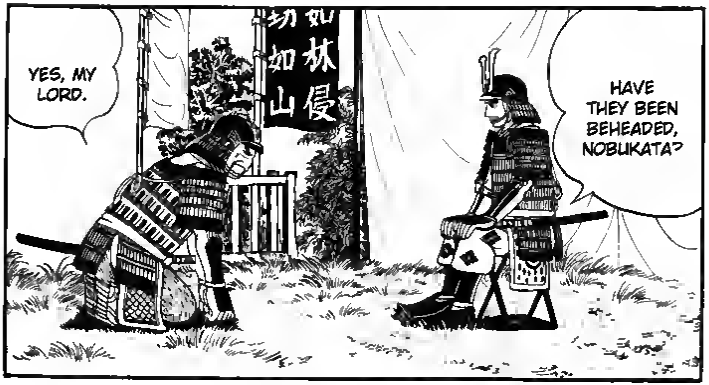


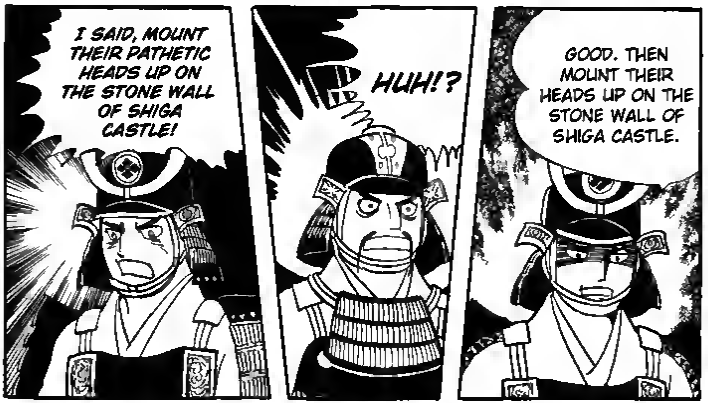
Usui Pass was buried in the corpses of the Kozuke army

Those who surrendered were bound by the hands and sent to the main camp.

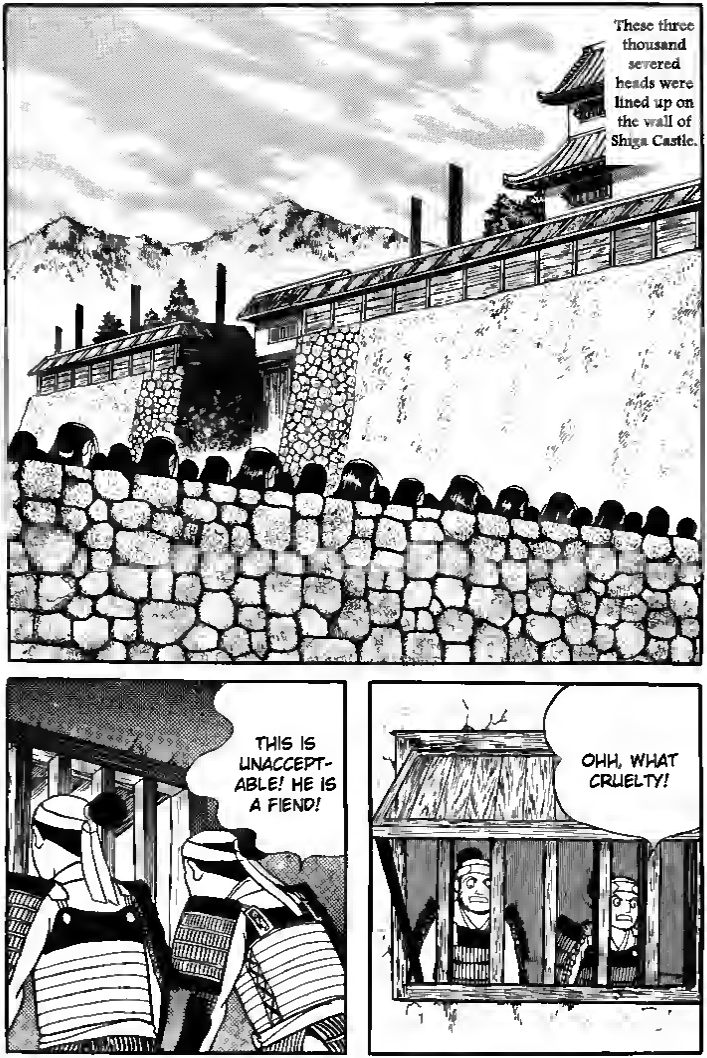
如風徐如
火不動如
山
疾如林侵
掠如火不
動如山
DID YOU JUST ORDER US TO KILL ALL THOSE WHO SURRENDERED?
HUH?
KILL ALL THOSE WHO SURRENDERED. DO NOT SPARE A SINGLE ONE.
BUT WE HAVE NEVER DONE SUCH A THING BEFORE!
YES. BEHEAD THEM ALL, GENERAL AND FOOTMAN ALIKE.

THE REASON THEY REBEL AT THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE IS BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN TOO LENIENT WITH THEM! KILL THEM! KILL THEM ALL!
WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE MASTER? HE HAS NEVER DONE SUCH A THING BEFORE...
IF THAT IS WHAT YOU WISH..
The surrendered soldiers were brutally beheaded It was written that they numbered three thousand.


YES, MY LORD.
HAVE THEY BEEN BEHEADED, NOBUKATA?

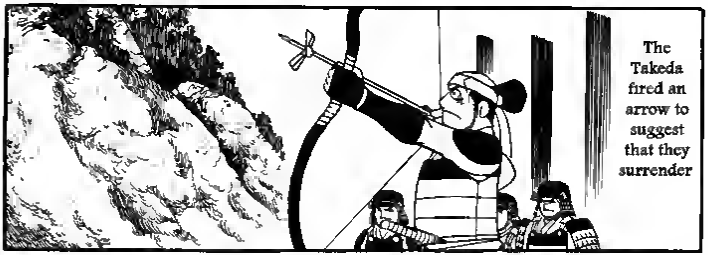

I SAID, MOUNT THEIR PATHETIC HEADS UP ON THE STONE WALL OF SHIGA CASTLE!
HUH!?
GOOD. THEN MOUNT THEIR HEADS UP ON THE STONE WALL OF SHIGA CASTLE.

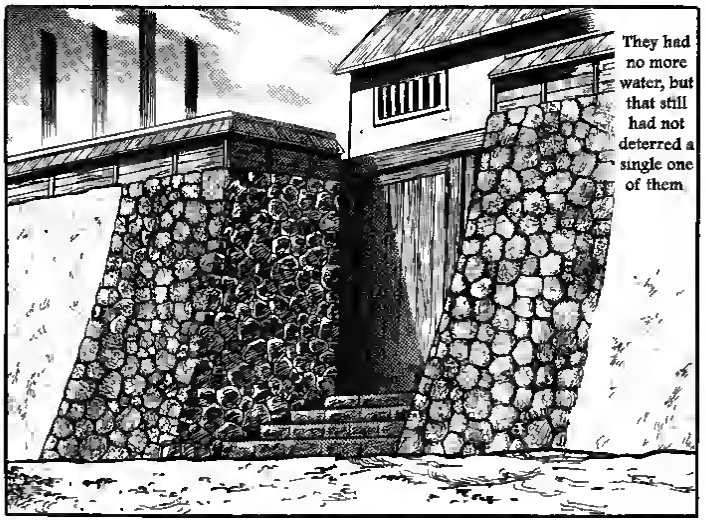
Itagaki Nobukata felt somber. He did not notice that Harunobu had come down with a fever.
H-HOW COULD HE... LORD HARUNOBU IS THE SON OF LORD NOBUTORA... AND I SUPPOSE THE SAME BRUTAL BLOOD FLOWS THROUGH HIS VEINS!

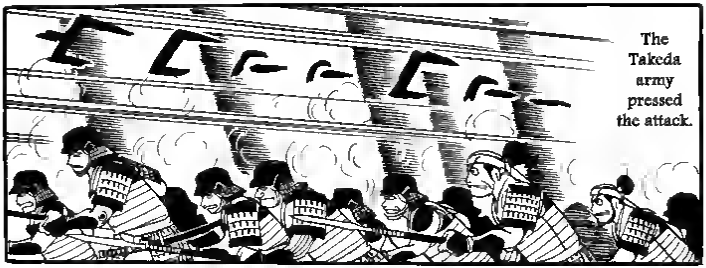

These three thousand severed heads were lined up on the wall of Shiga Castle.
THIS IS UNACCEPT-ABLE! HE IS A FIEND!
OHH, WHAT CRUELTY!

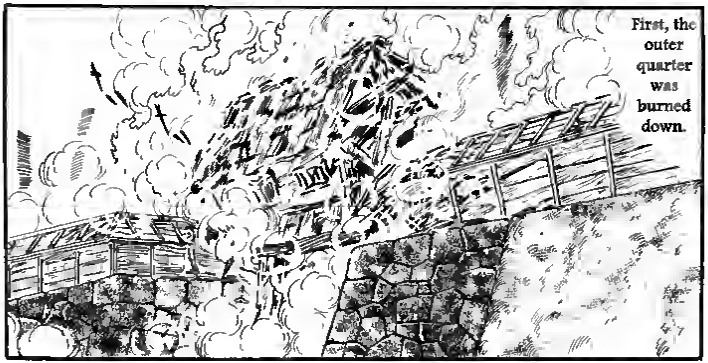
YES! AND EVEN IN DEATH, WE WILL CURSE THE TAKEDA!

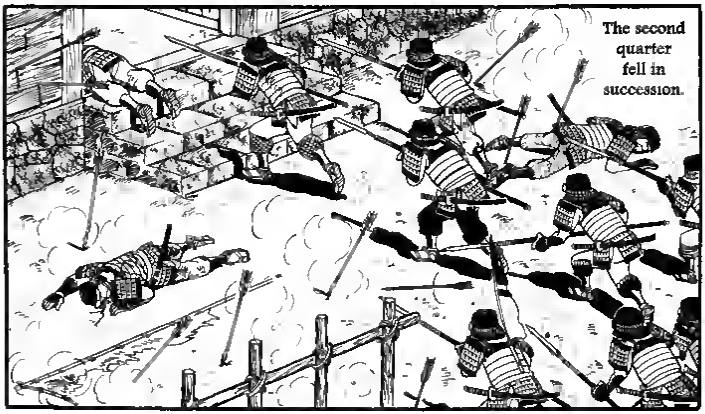
WE WILL FIGHT HIM AS LONG AS WE STILL LIVE!

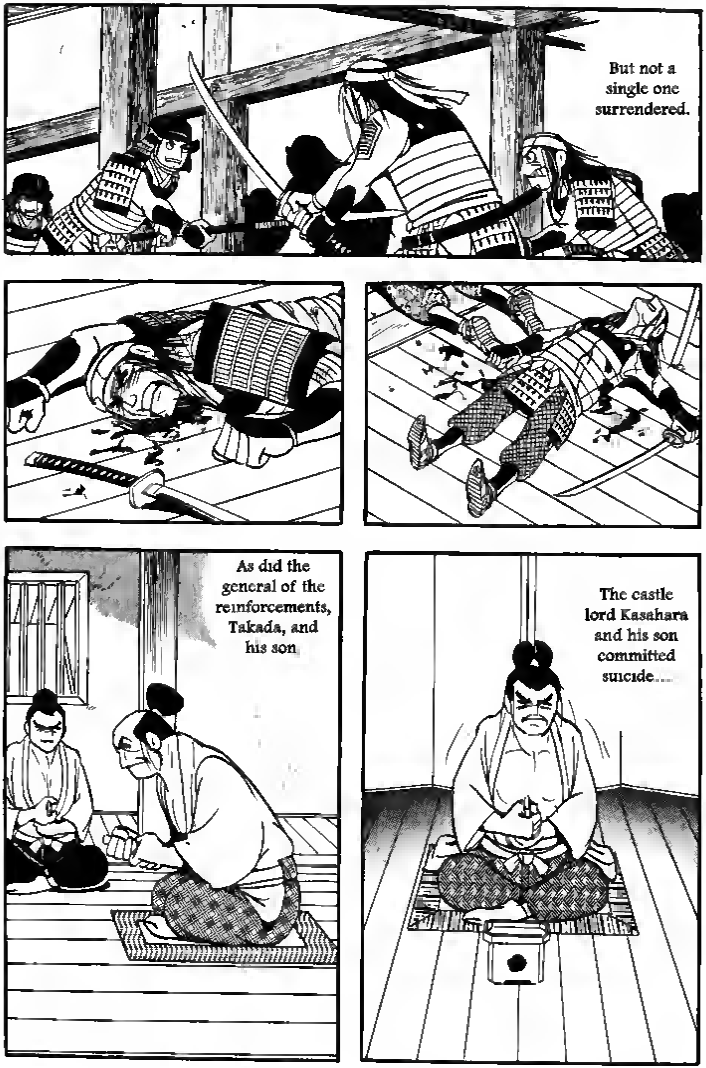

The Takeda fired an arrow to suggest that they surrender

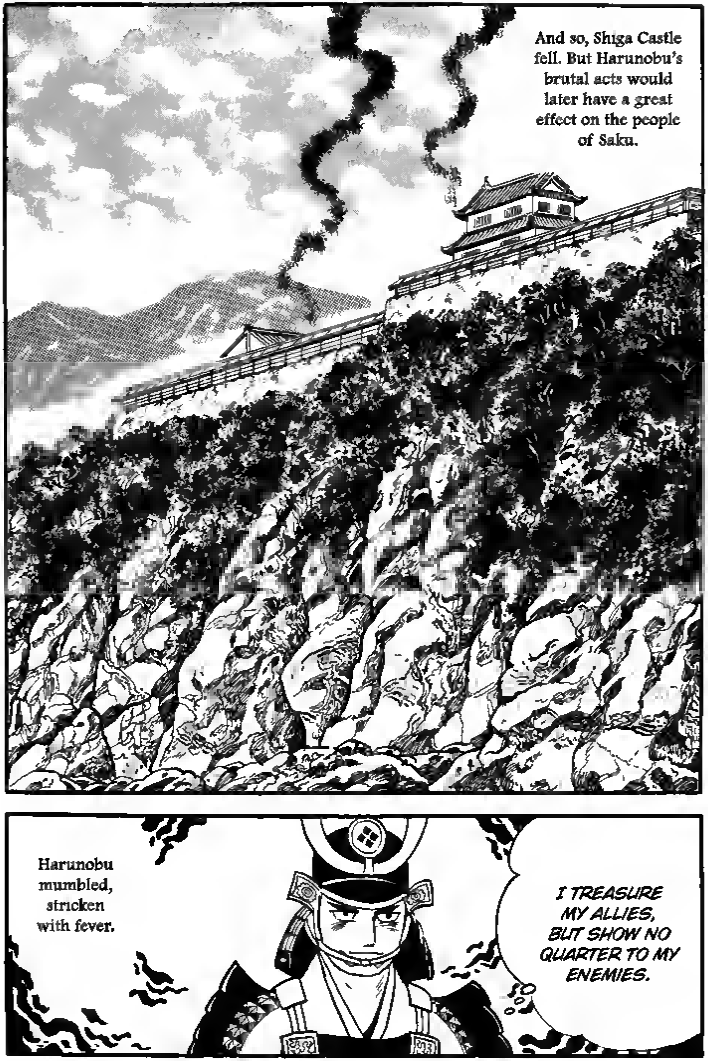

They had no more water, but that still had not deterred a single one of them

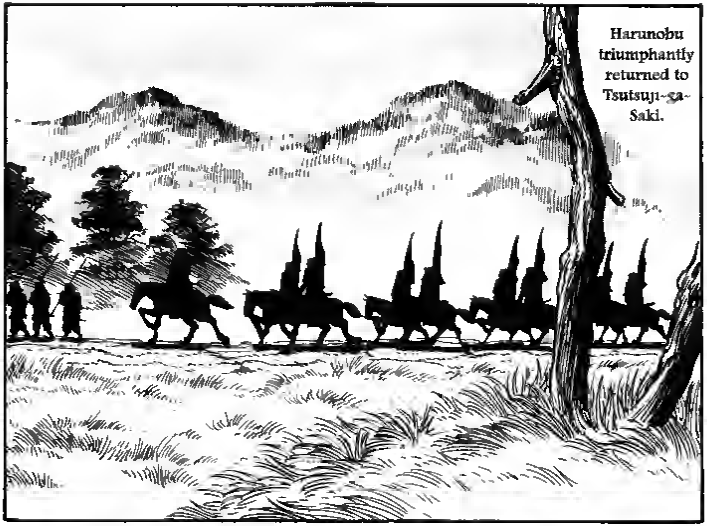

The Takeda army pressed the attack.

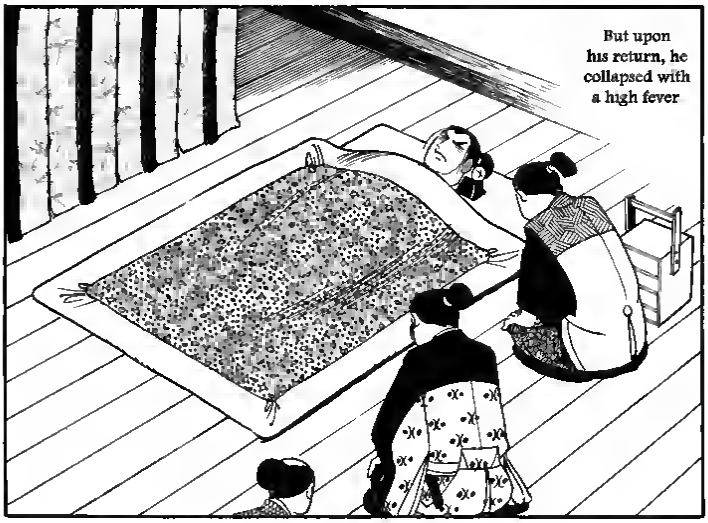

First, the outer quarter was burned down.


The second quarter fell in succession.


But not a single one surrendered.
As did the general of the reinforcements, Takada, and his son
The castle lord Kasahara and his son committed suicide....


And so, Shiga Castle fell. But Harunobu's brutal acts would later have a great effect on the people of Saku.
Harunobu mumbled, stricken with fever.
I TREASURE MY ALLIES, BUT SHOW NO QUARTER TO MY ENEMIES.


Harunobu triumphantly returned to Tsutsuji-ga-Saki.

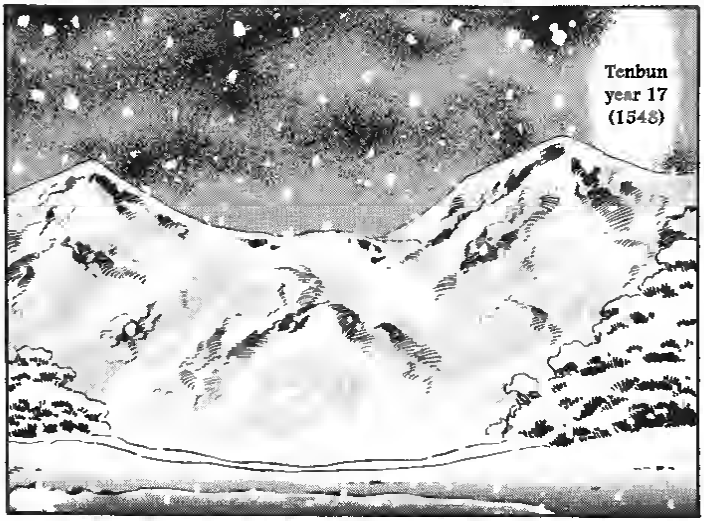

But upon his return, he collapsed with a high fever

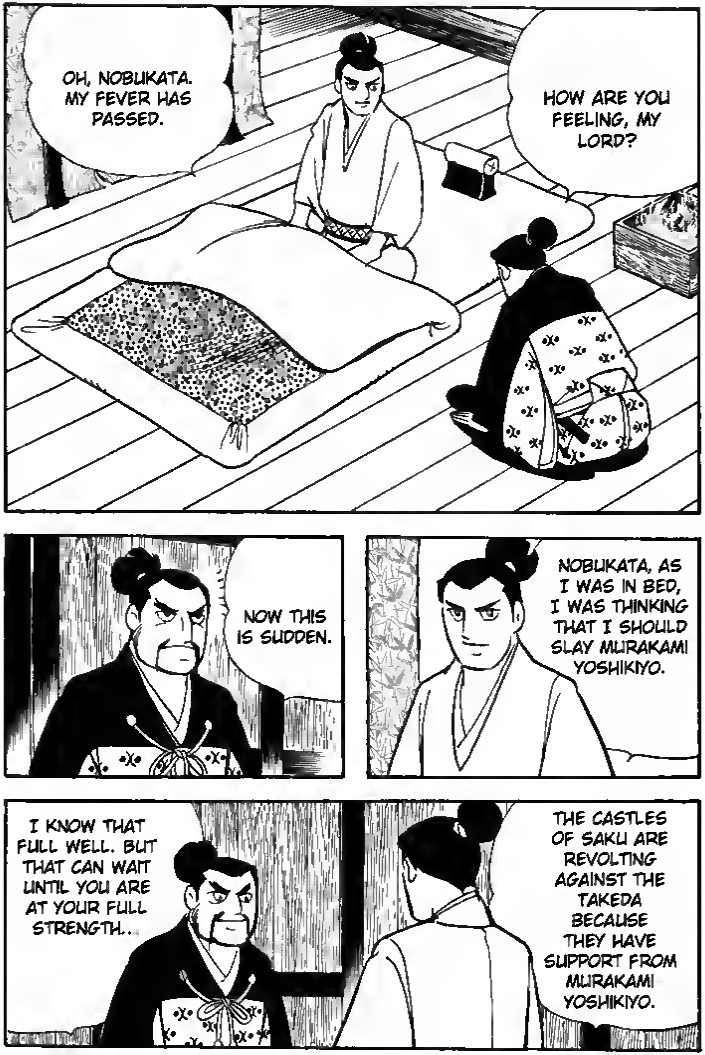
TAKEDA SHINGEN

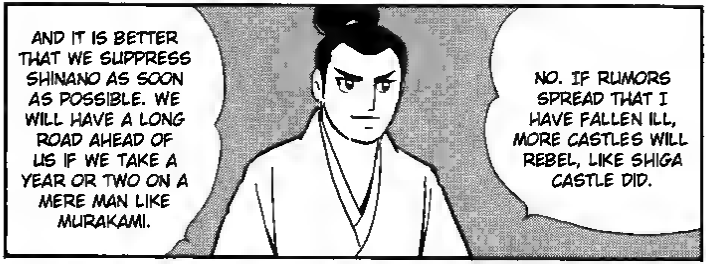
TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

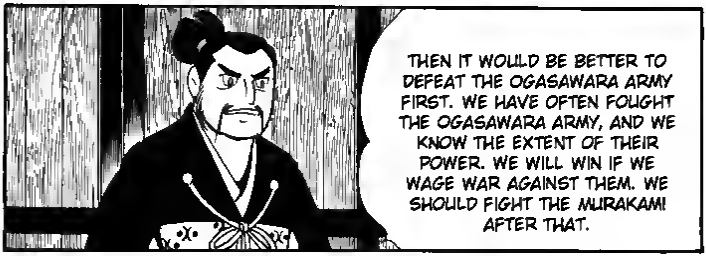
CHAPTER 25

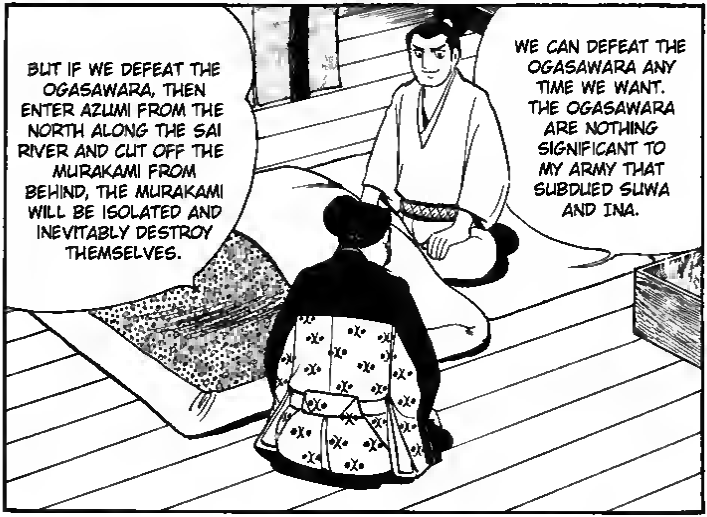
Chapter 26: The Cornerstone Passes

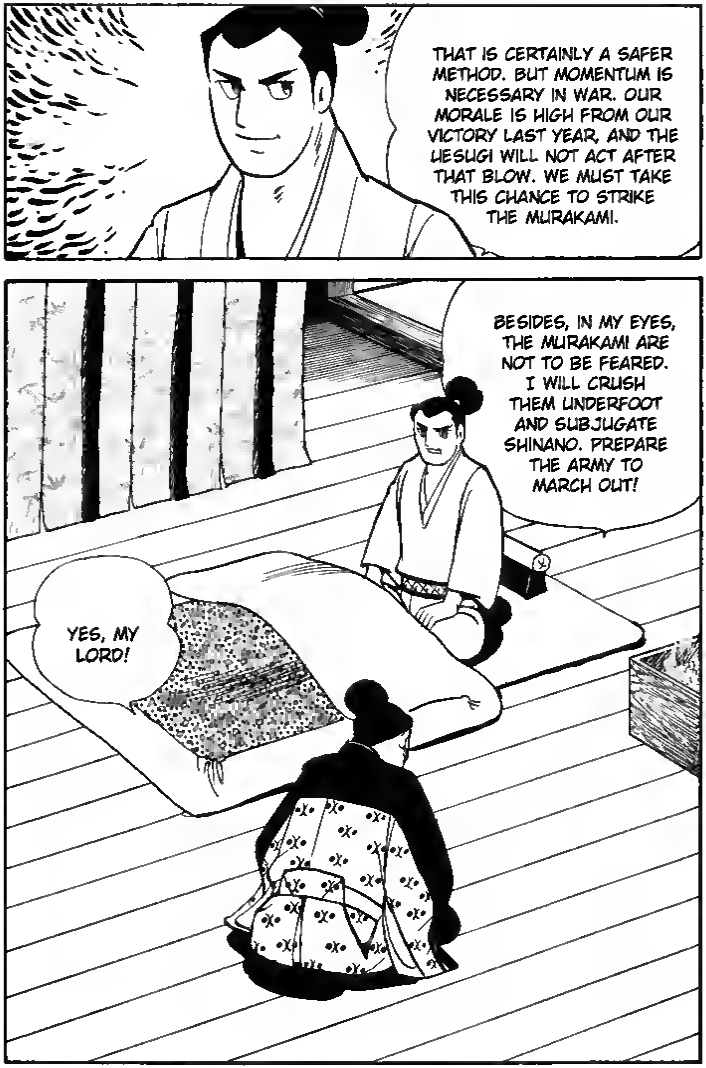


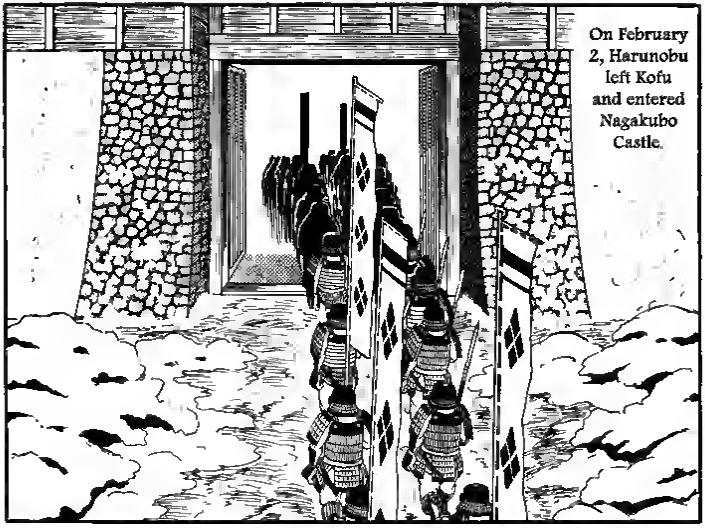

OH, NOBUKATA. MY FEVER HAS PASSED.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING, MY LORD?
NOW THIS IS SUDDEN.
NOBUKATA, AS I WAS IN BED, I WAS THINKING THAT I SHOULD SLAY MURAKAMI YOSHIKIYO.
I KNOW THAT FULL WELL. BUT THAT CAN WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE AT YOUR FULL STRENGTH...
THE CASTLES OF SAKU ARE REVOLTING AGAINST THE TAKEDA BECAUSE THEY HAVE SUPPORT FROM MURAKAMI YOSHIKIYO.

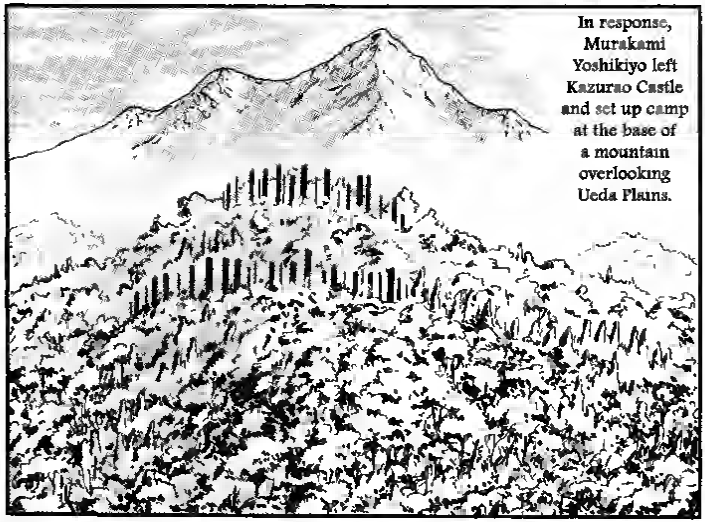

AND IT IS BETTER THAT WE SUPPRESS SHINANO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. WE WILL HAVE A LONG ROAD AHEAD OF US IF WE TAKE A YEAR OR TWO ON A MERE MAN LIKE MURAKAMI.
NO. IF RUMORS SPREAD THAT I HAVE FALLEN ILL, MORE CASTLES WILL REBEL, LIKE SHIGA CASTLE DID.

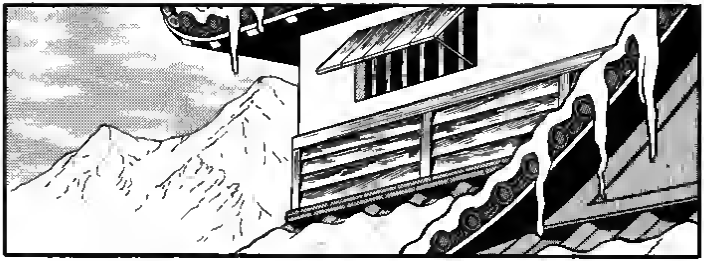

THEN IT WOULD BE BETTER TO DEFEAT THE OGASAWARA ARMY FIRST. WE HAVE OFTEN FOUGHT THE OGASAWARA ARMY, AND WE KNOW THE EXTENT OF THEIR POWER. WE WILL WIN IF WE WAGE WAR AGAINST THEM. WE SHOULD FIGHT THE MURAKAMI AFTER THAT.

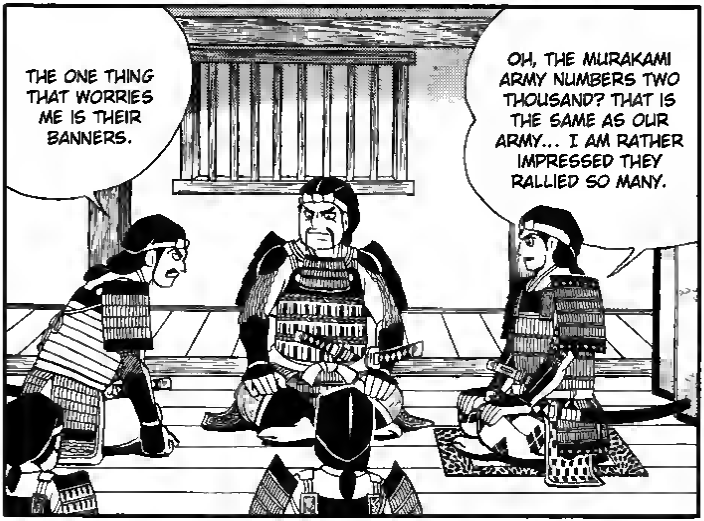

BUT IF WE DEFEAT THE OGASAWARA, THEN ENTER AZUMI FROM THE NORTH ALONG THE SAI RIVER AND CUT OFF THE MURAKAMI FROM BEHIND, THE MURAKAMI WILL BE ISOLATED AND INEVITABLY DESTROY THEMSELVES.
WE CAN DEFEAT THE OGASAWARA ANY TIME WE WANT. THE OGASAWARA ARE NOTHING SIGNIFICANT TO MY ARMY THAT SUBDUED SUWA AND INA.


THAT IS CERTAINLY A SAFER METHOD. BUT MOMENTUM IS NECESSARY IN WAR. OUR MORALE IS HIGH FROM OUR VICTORY LAST YEAR, AND THE UESUGI WILL NOT ACT AFTER THAT BLOW. WE MUST TAKE THIS CHANCE TO STRIKE THE MURAKAMI.
BESIDES, IN MY EYES, THE MURAKAMI ARE NOT TO BE FEARED. I WILL CRUSH THEM UNDERFOOT AND SUBJUGATE SHINANO. PREPARE THE ARMY TO MARCH OUT!
YES, MY LORD!


On February 2, Harunobu left Kofu and entered Nagakubo Castle.


In response, Murakami Yoshikiyo left Kazurao Castle and set up camp at the base of a mountain overlooking Ueda Plains.



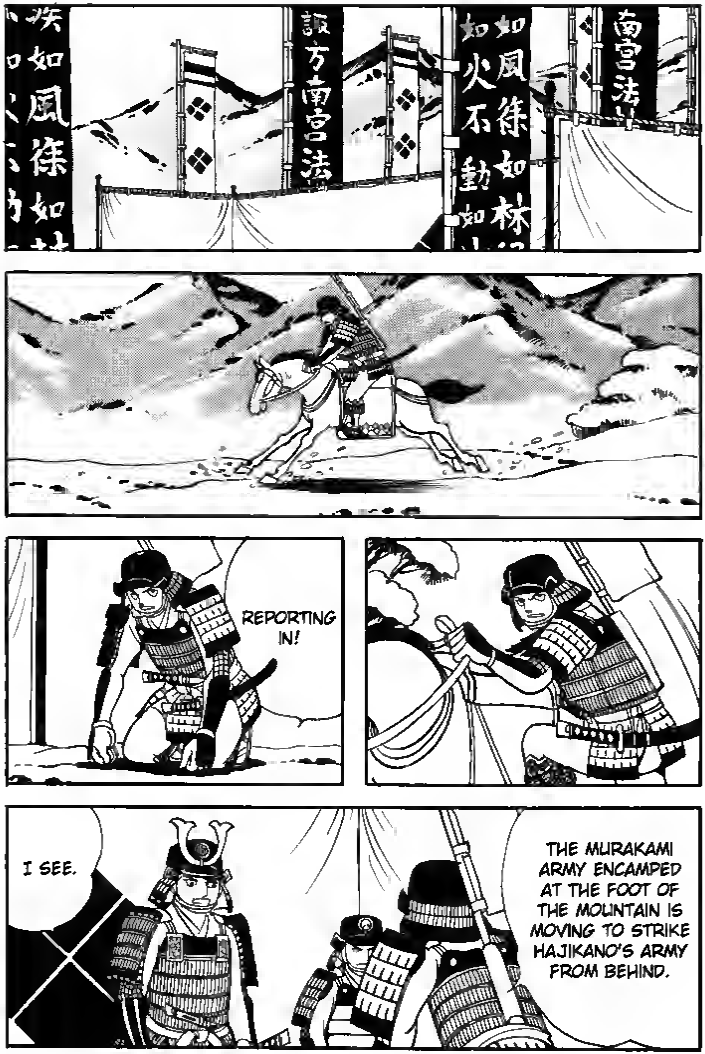

THE ONE THING THAT WORRIES ME IS THEIR BANNERS.
OH, THE MURAKAMI ARMY NUMBERS TWO THOUSAND? THAT IS THE SAME AS OUR ARMY... I AM RATHER IMPRESSED THEY RALLIED SO MANY.

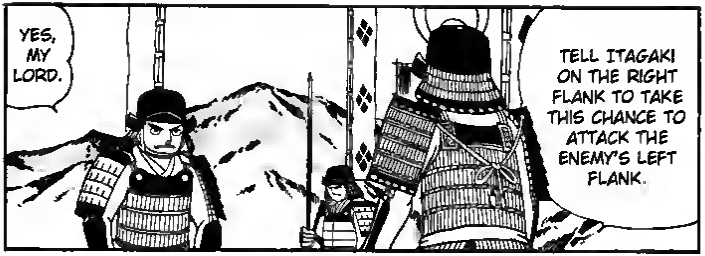
EVERY ENEMY GENERAL AND SOLDIER CARRIES A WHITE FUNERAL GARMENT AS THEIR BANNER.

WHAT ABOUT THEIR BANNERS ?

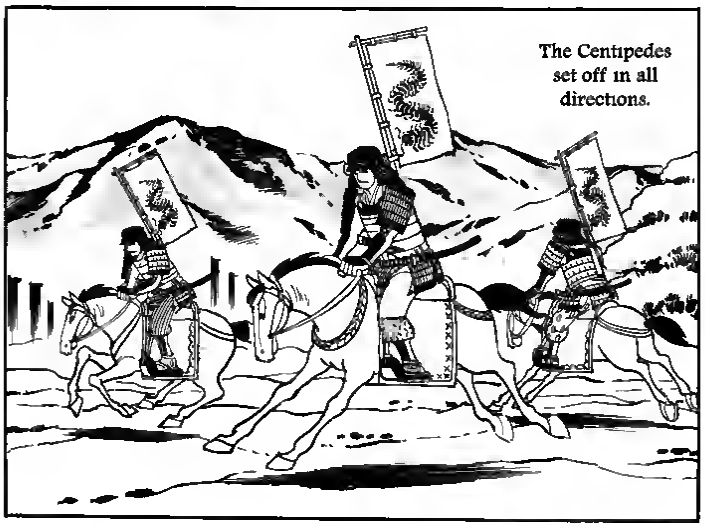
MY LORD, THE MURAKAMI ARMY MUST BE PREPARED TO BE SLAIN DOWN TO THE LAST MAN.
WHEN WE DEFEATED THE KOZUKE ARMY, WE SEVERED EVEN THE CAPTIVES' HEADS. SO THOSE WHO FIGHT THE TAKEDA HAVE ONLY TWO CHOICES... VICTORY OR DEATH...

THEN THAT IS ALL WELL. I MUST ANNIHILATE THE MURAKAMI ARMY AS I DID THE KOZUKE ARMY. I SHOW NO MERCY ON MY FOES.
YES, MY LORD?
HAJIKANO DEN'EMON.
YES, MY LORD.
TAKE THREE HUNDRED MEN AND SURROUND IWAHANA CASTLE. ONCE YOU HAVE TAKEN IT, CUT OFF THE ENEMY'S ESCAPE ROUTE.
The war began on February 14, when Hajikano Den'emon headed to besiege Iwahana Castle.


南宮法!
如風徐如林
如火不動如
諏方南宮法
疾如風徐如
REPORTING IN!
I SEE.
THE MURAKAMI ARMY ENCAMPED AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAIN IS MOVING TO STRIKE HAJIKANO'S ARMY FROM BEHIND.


YES, MY LORD.
TELL ITAGAKI ON THE RIGHT FLANK TO TAKE THIS CHANCE TO ATTACK THE ENEMY'S LEFT FLANK.

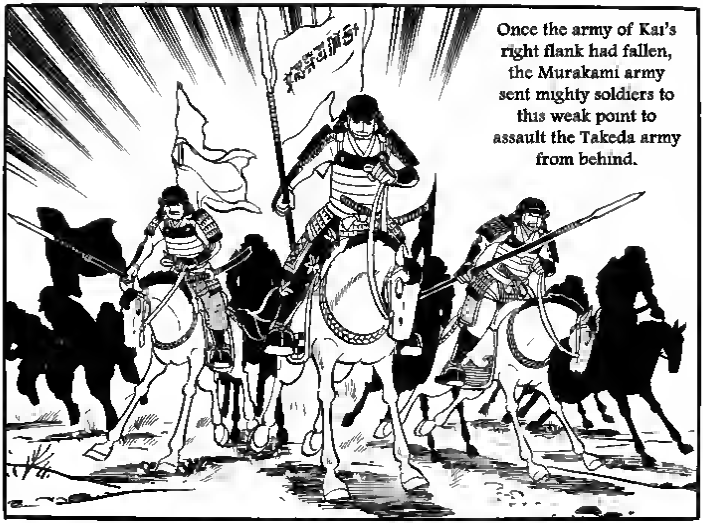
ONCE NOBUKATA'S CHARGE HAS BEGUN, OUR ARMY WILL CHARGE!

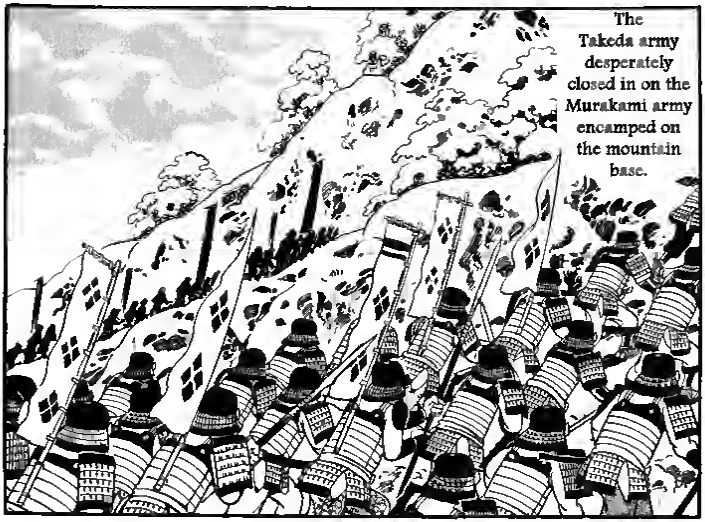

The Centipedes set off in all directions.

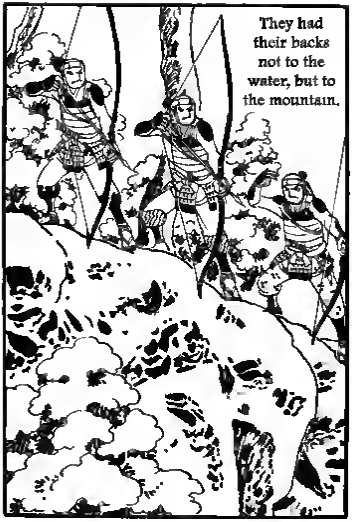
Itagaki's army began charging to attack the enemy's left flank.
But the Murakami army pursuing Hajikano Den'emon's army suddenly did a right about-face and assaulted the Itagaki army's flank.
ドドド

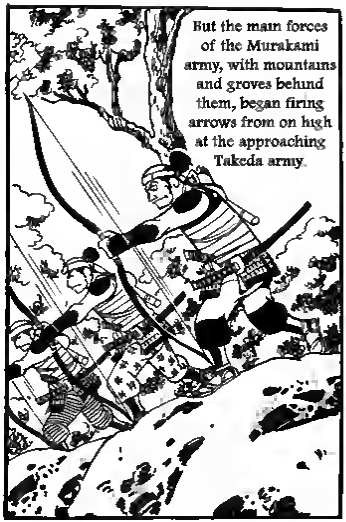
The Itagaki army that tried to surround the Murakami's left flank were surrounded instead.

The Itagaki army's flank fell.

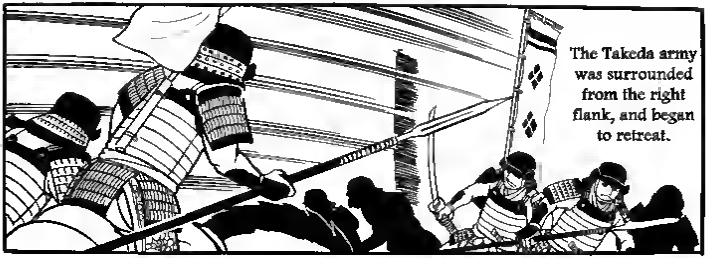

Once the army of Kai's right flank had fallen, the Murakami army sent mighty soldiers to this weak point to assault the Takeda army from behind.

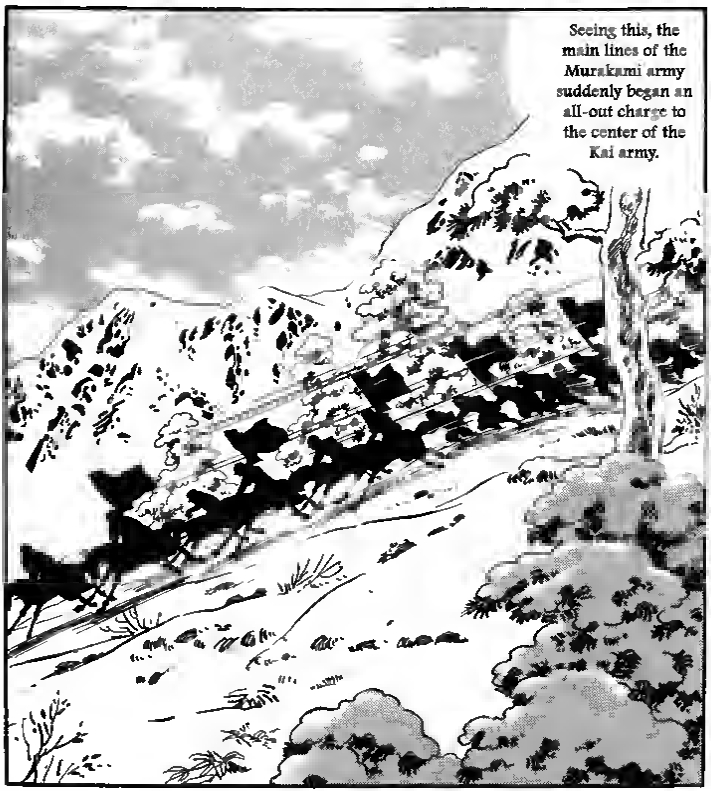

The Takeda army desperately closed in on the Murakami army encamped on the mountain base.


They had their backs not to the water, but to the mountain.

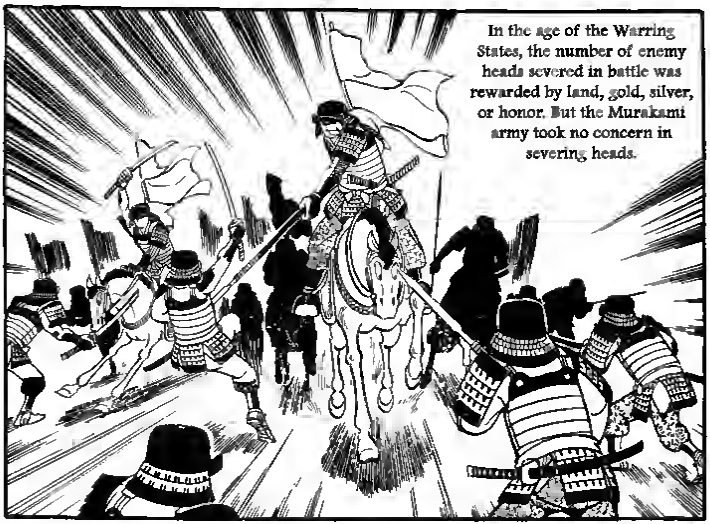

But the main forces of the Murakami army, with mountains and groves behind them, began firing arrows from on high at the approaching Takeda army.

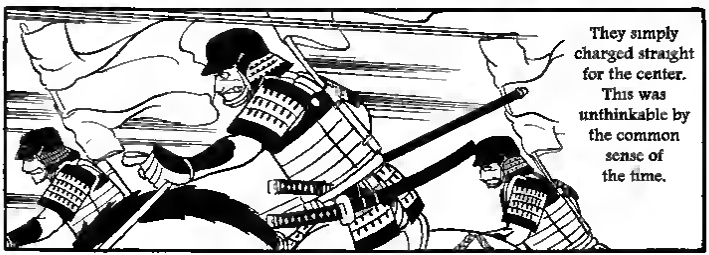
The Murakami army was not concerned with being surrounded, but the same could not be said about the Takeda. The Takeda army had the disadvantage of terrain.

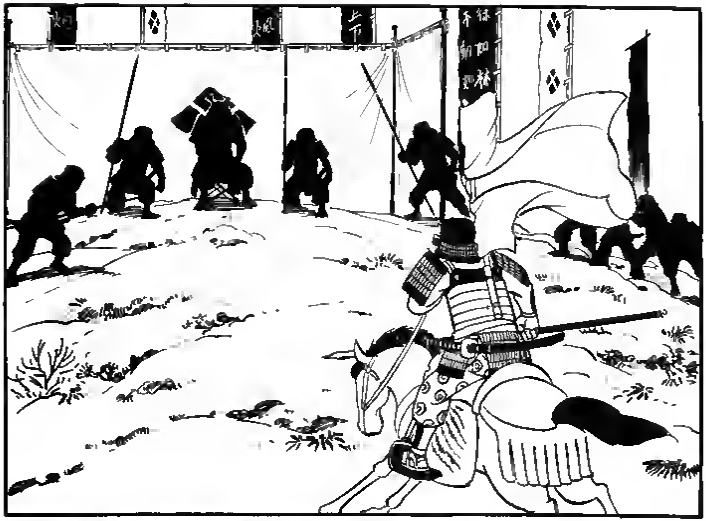

The Takeda army was surrounded from the right flank, and began to retreat.

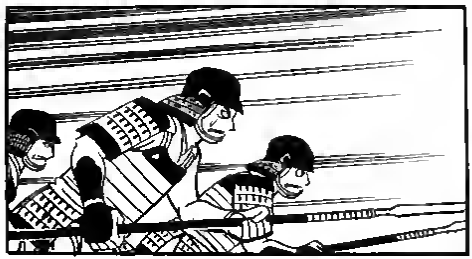

Seeing this, the main lines of the Murakami army suddenly began an all-out charge to the center of the Kai army.

The main lines of the Murakami army raised their banners of funeral garments and charged without a word.

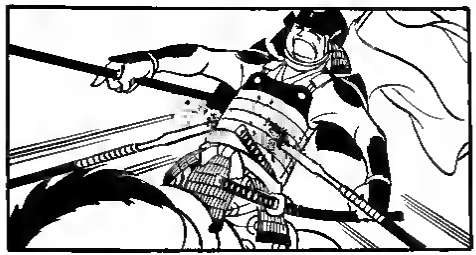

In the age of the Warring States, the number of enemy heads severed in battle was rewarded by land, gold, silver, or honor. But the Murakami army took no concern in severing heads.


They simply charged straight for the center. This was unthinkable by the common sense of the time.





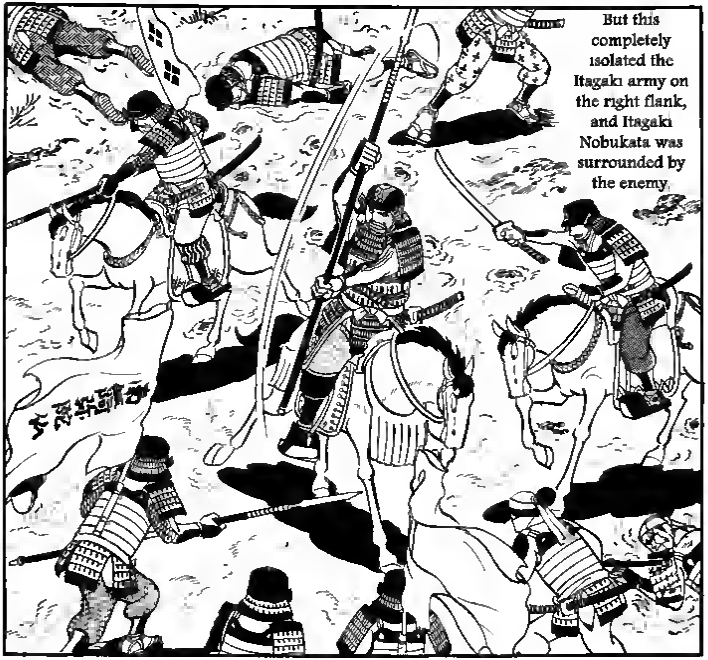
DEFEND THE MASTER! DEFEND THE MASTER!



But the Murakami army silently charged on, aiming for Harunobu.
DEMON!

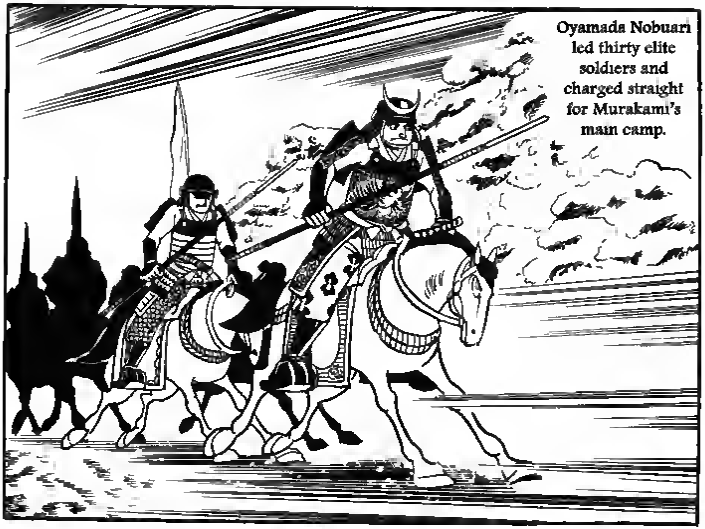
I'M FINE! IT'S ONLY A SCRATCH.
OHH! MY LORD!
YES.
MY LORD, IT IS TOO DANGEROUS HERE. WE SHOULD MOVE THE MAIN CAMP TO OYAMADA ON THE LEFT FLANK.

Harunobu moved the main camp to the camp of Oyamada Nobuari on the left flank.

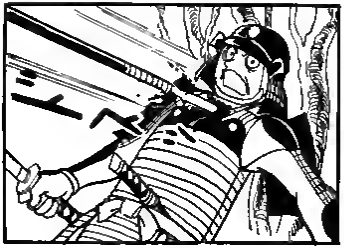

But this completely isolated the Itagaki army on the right flank, and Itagaki Nobukata was surrounded by the enemy.

WHAT? WHERE?
REPORTING IN! WE HAVE LOCATED THE ENEMY GENERAL MURAKAMI YOSHIKIYO!
HE IS AT THE ROOTS OF THE PINE ON THAT HILL!

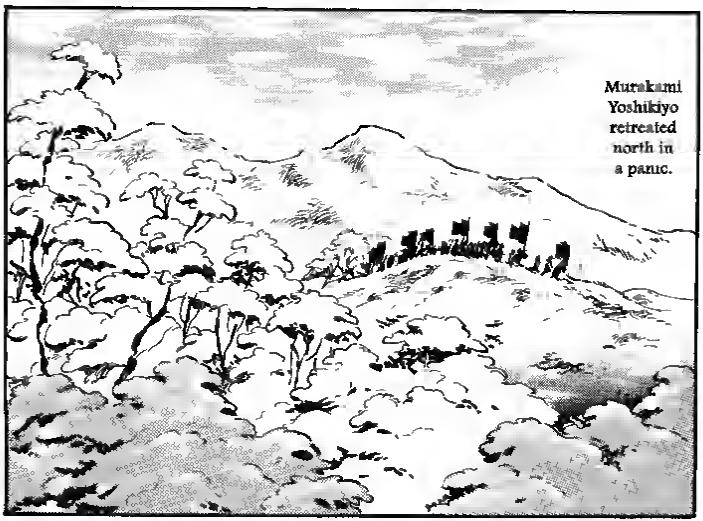
OYAMADA NOBUARI!
THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE OURSELVES FROM THIS CRISIS IS TO STRIKE AT THEIR MAIN CAMP.
AFTER THE ENEMY'S GENERAL OFFENSIVE, THEIR DEFENSE OF THE MAIN CAMP WILL BE THIN. I WANT YOU TO ASSAULT THE ENEMY'S MAIN CAMP.
YES, MY LORD?
LET US GO!
UNDERSTOOD. I SHALL LAY MY LIFE DOWN FOR IT.


Oyamada Nobuari led thirty elite soldiers and charged straight for Murakami's main camp.

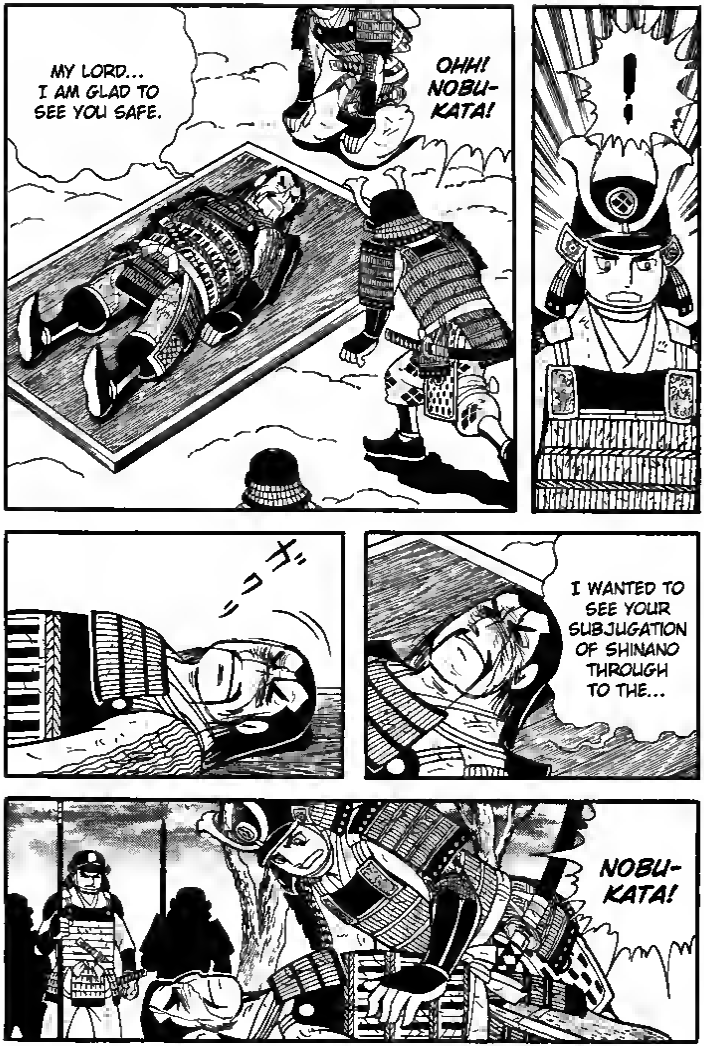
As they had expected, the main camp's defenses were thin. Oyamada desperately cut his way through them.



Oyamada Nobuari was now within one step of main camp. And here, another deadly struggle unfolded.



Murakami Yoshikiyo retreated north in a panic.


MY LORD... I AM GLAD TO SEE YOU SAFE.
OHH! NOBU-KATA!
!
I WANTED TO SEE YOUR SUBJUGATION OF SHINANO THROUGH TO THE...
NOBU-KATA!

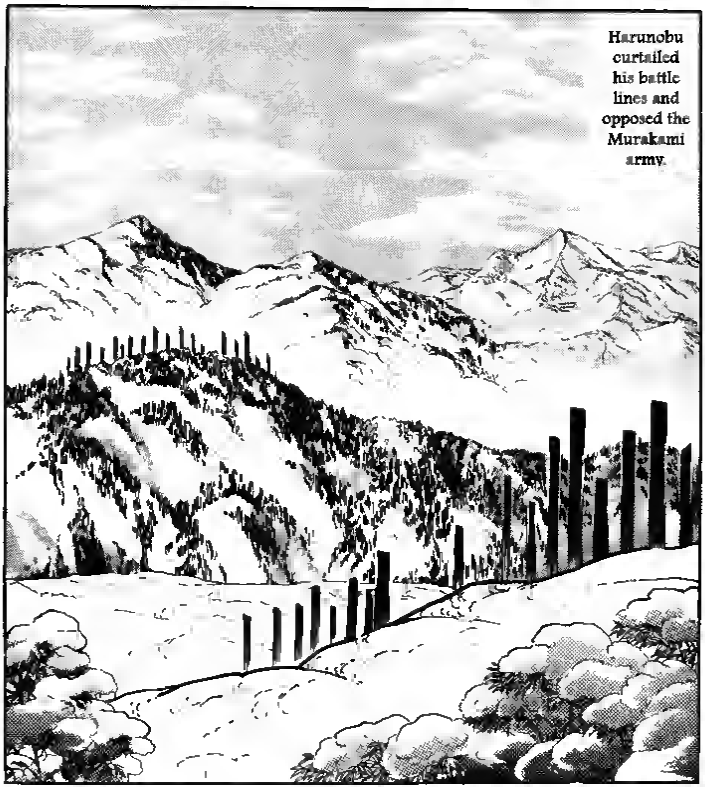
YES, MY LORD!
BRING ME A HORSE !!
WHERE IS AMARI? IS TORAYASU SAFE!?

AHH!
TORA-YASU!

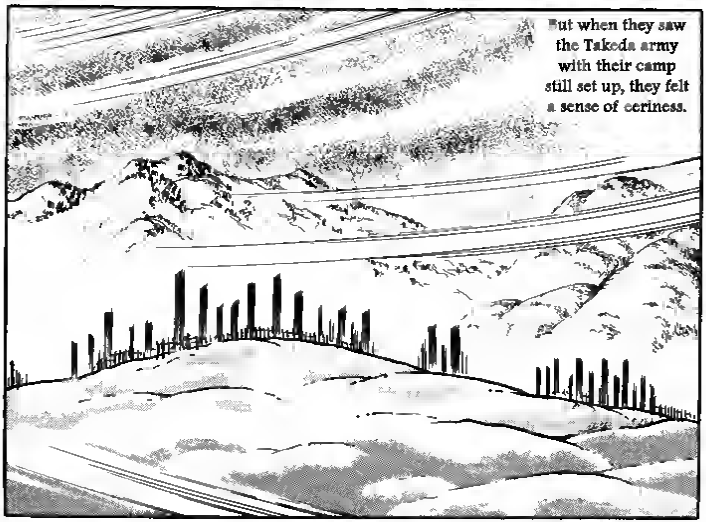
TORA-YASU!
Ever since Harunobu exiled his father Nobutora from Kai and become the new lord, Itagaki Nobukata and Amari Torayasu were his right and left hands.
Harunobu did not shed a tear, nor did he let out a cry. He simply silently looked at his deathly face.
Harunobu considered this his first defeat.
I WAS TOO RASH. ITAGAKI WAS RIGHT, I SHOULD HAVE ASSAULTED OGASAWARA FIRST.

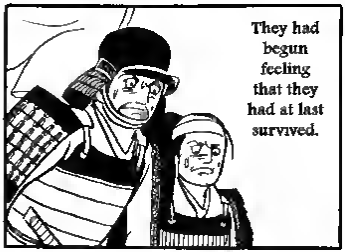
諏方南宮
如風徐如林侵
如火不動如山
疾如風徐如林
掠如火不動如

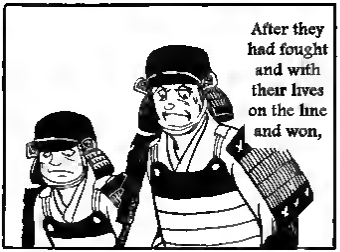
BESIDES, IT WOULD BE A DISSERVICE TO ITAGAKI AND AMARI IF I RETREATED WHILE STILL LOSING.
THE SAME GOES FOR MURAKAMI. THEY HAVE LOST THE GENERALS SAIJO, YASHIRO, AND MORIMURA, AND THEIR DEAD NUMBER THE SAME AS OURS.


Harunobu curtailed his battle lines and opposed the Murakami army.

At first, the Murakami army was drunk on victory

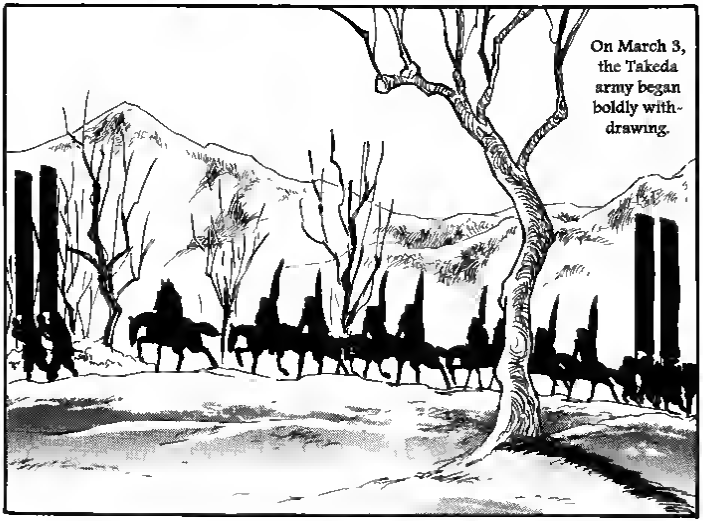

But when they saw the Takeda army with their camp still set up, they felt a sense of eeriness.


They had begun feeling that they had at last survived.

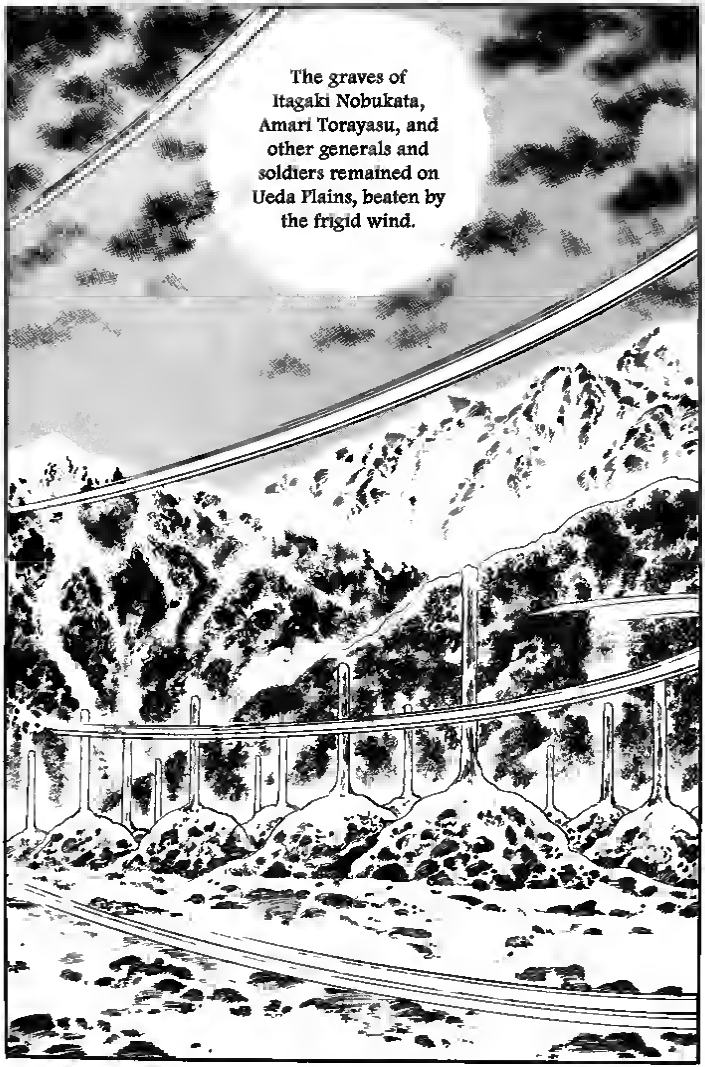

After they had fought and with their lives on the line and won,

Harunobu opposed the enemy like so for twenty days.
The Takeda army ran out of rations.
WE ARE WITHDRAWING?
GOOD. ORDER THE ARMY TO WITHDRAW.

THEY WILL NOT HAVE THE STRENGTH TO PURSUE US. WE CAN WITHDRAW BOLDLY.
THESE TWENTY DAYS OF OPPOSITION HAVE LEFT THE MURAKAMI ARMY WITH A SENSE OF ENDLESS EERINESS.


On March 3, the Takeda army began boldly withdrawing.

The Murakami army watched on in silence.


The graves of Itagaki Nobukata, Amari Torayasu, and other generals and soldiers remained on Ueda Plains, beaten by the frigid wind.

The Asura – END

KUROKAWA GOLD MINE – THE LEGEND OF THE TAKEDA'S GOLD

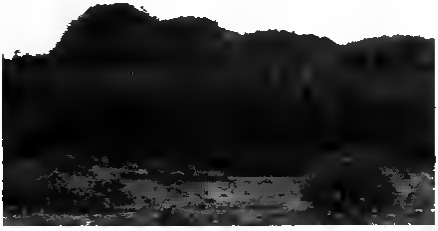
Abandoned Mine Entrance to Kuroawa Gold Mine

Shingen began to mine the gold slumbering deep in the mountains of the domain of Kai in Tenbun year 15 (1546). Among them, Kurokawa Gold Mine of Inner Chichibu boasted the greatest prosperity with its buried treasure, and there were over a thousand homes of miners there, as it says in the Chronicles of Kai: "Once gold came from Kurokawa, with a thousand homes". The gold mined here was cast into high-purity currency called "Kai Gold", and used for obtaining arms and rifles. According to the Koyo Gunkan, Shingen would reward his retainers that achieved great merits with three scoops of gold in each hand.

Kurokawa Gold Mine was also known as Cockscomb Mountain

Photography by Shin-Jinbutsuoraisha, Ltd

SHIGA CASTLE (KASAHARA CASTLE) – THREE THOUSAND BLOODY HEADS



Ruins of Shiga Castle that remain between the mountains

Guidepost of the castle ruins that speaks of the grudge of the people of Saku

On August 11, Tenbun year 16 (1547), after a twenty-day siege, Shiga Castle of Saku finally fell, and three hundred men were slain, including the castle lord Kasahara Shinzaburo Kiyoshige.

In this battle, Shingen took the lurid strategy of lining up three thousand heads of enemy soldiers on the stone wall, and sold off the captured women and children. It is said that Kasahara's beautiful wife was bought by Oyamada Nobuari, lord of Tsuru, for twenty mon. This left the people of Saku with a deep resentment, and they would never truly submit since.

By the castle ruins, which have by now entirely collapsed with barely a trace, the supposedly cursed grave of Kasahara Shinzaburo stands alone in its regret.

Grave of Takeda's general Itagaki Nobukata

UEDA PLAINS – LAND OF SHINGENS'S HISTORICAL RETREAT

Ancient battleground of Ueda Plains. Iwahana is to the left
Grave of Takeda's general Itagaki Nobukata

In February of Tenbun year 17 (1548), Shingen led seven thousand elites to march on Chisagata. His objective was to destroy Kazurao Castle, the headquarters of his mighty foe Murakami Yoshikiyo, heralded as the bravest man in Shinano.

After a string of victories, Shingen fearlessly passed through the granary district of Shiota Plains, said to be Yoshikiyo's lifeline, and faced the Murakami army on Ueda Plains. With six ranks of 3,500 soldiers, and led by Itagaki Nobukata, at first it seemed like the Kai army had overwhelmed the enemy. But with the terrain to their advantage, the matchlessly brave Murakami army regrouped and launched a wave attack. The flow of battle then changed. Beginning with Itagaki, proud with his predominance and identifying severed heads on the battlefield, the enemy surrounded and killed all the famed generals, including Amari Torayasu and Hajikano Den'emon. Shingen, too, was left with light wounds after a one-on-one battle with Murakami Yoshikiyo, who fiercely led the charge. This truly was his first painful defeat.
Spent, the Murakami army fortified themselves in Kazurao Castle, but the army of Kai did not have the strength to pursue them. But Shingen refused to retreat due to bitterness, and he only retreated to Uehara Castle twenty days later, at the beginning of March, after being persuaded by his mother, Lady Ou.

Ueda Plains, at the banks of Chikuma River, still retains the landscape of a battlefield, and Iwahana, where the Murakami's main camp stood, can still be seen from the ancient battlefield. Just outside, there is a small shrine called Itagaki Shrine, hiding in the shadows of plastic greenhouses. This is the grave of the cornerstone Itagaki Nobukata, who died on these grounds. Having planned Harunobu's exile of Nobutora, and displaying his political ability as Shingen's number-one associate, he undoubtedly enjoyed seeing Shingen's growth. Before the grave of this political warrior who died too soon, people cannot help but clasp their hands in prayer.
Later, this defeat was taught as the defeat that crushed Shingen's pride over his string of victories.

Photography by Taniyama Shunichiro

GENEALOGY

⊙**KAI:**
Takeda Harunobu (Shingen)
Legal Wife: Lady Sanjo (Daughter of Sanjo Kinyori)
Concubines: Satomi (Daughter of Nezu Motonao)
Koihime (Daughter of Suwa Yorishige)

RETAINERS:
Tenkyu Nobushige
Itagaki Nobukata
Amari Torayasu
Komai Kohakusai
Tachiki Sengen (Doctor)
Yamamoto Kansuke (Spy)
Imai Hyobu (Former Magistrate)
- Momokawa Kazuemon
- Tanba Yajuro
- Okura Souemon

Hinata Saburoshiro (Former Magistrate)
Otsuki Heizaemon
Hayase Kogoro
Yokoda Bicchu-no-Kami
Tada Sanhachi

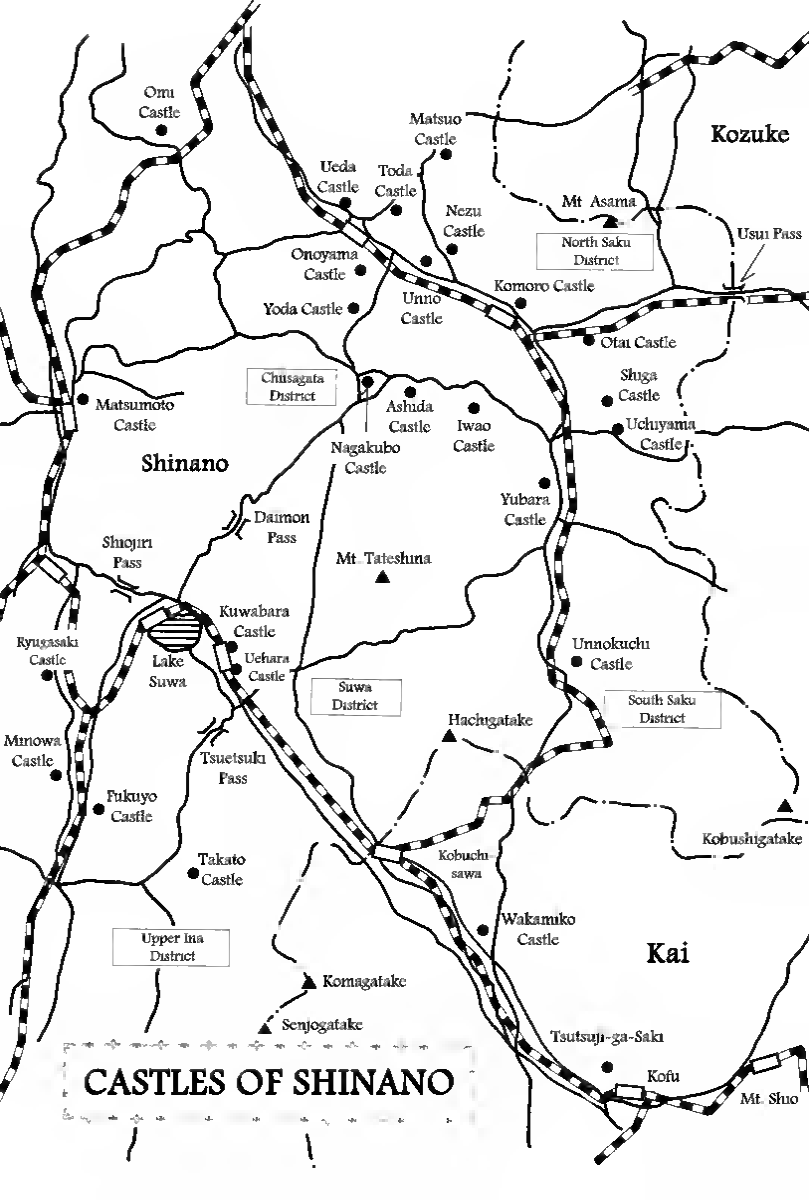
⊙Kozuke
Uesugi Norimasa
Kanai Hidekage

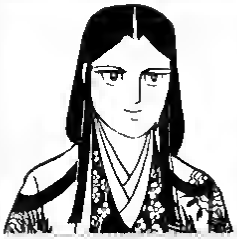
⊙Chisakata
Nezu Castle – Nezu Motonao
Nagakubo Castle – Oi Sadataka
Uchuyama Castle – Oi Sadakiyo
Matsuo Castle – Sanada Yukitaka

⊙Suwa
Suwa Torao/Mitsuchika
Kanasashi Takanobu

⊙Ina
Ogasawara Nagatoki
Fujisawa Yorichika
Takato Yoritsugu/Renpoken

⊙North Shinano
Murakami Yoshikiyo


Omi Castle
Matsuo Castle
Kozuke
Ueda Castle
Toda Castle
Nezu Castle
Mt Asama
North Saku District
Usui Pass
Onoyama Castle
Komoro Castle
Yoda Castle
Unno Castle
Otai Castle
Chusagata District
Shuga Castle
Matsumoto Castle
Ashida Castle
Iwao Castle
Uchiyama Castle
Nagakubo Castle
Shinano
Yubara Castle
Daimon Pass
Shiojiri Pass
Mt Tateshina
Kuwabara Castle
Ryugasaki Castle
Lake Suwa
Uehara Castle
Unnokuchi Castle
Suwa District
South Saku District
Hachigatake
Minowa Castle
Tsuetsuki Pass
Fukuyo Castle
Kobushigatake
Takato Castle
Kobuchi sawa
Wakamiko Castle
Kai
Upper Ina District
Komagatake
Senjogatake
Tsutsuji-ga-Saki
Kofu
Mt. Shuo
CASTLES OF SHINANO



Marriageable Age in the Warring States Period

From a reader's postcard

A reader asked the question, "In volume 2, Suwa Yorishige ended his life heroically at Toko Temple when he was 28, and his daughter Koihime, born to his wife from the Omi Clan, seemed to be twelve or thirteen years old. I feel like Yorishige was married a little young..."

From the point of view of our modern customs, that really is a young age to be married and have children, but at the time, giving birth to a son to continue the clan was the first issue for those inheriting a clan, and for that reason, they were married at a very young age. And needless to say, bringing in legal wives and concubines was one of the ways of maintaining friendship with neighboring provinces.

In the case of Harunobu (Shingen), he was married at the age of thirteen to Uesugi Tomooki's daughter Matsu (age 14), but Matsu died from a miscarriage. His sister Nene, too, was thirteen when she married Yorishige, gave birth to Torao two years later, and died due to anxiety the next year. Due to the harsh fate of the defeated in the Warring States, Koihime became Shingen's concubine at the age of twelve or thirteen, and gave birth to Katsuyori at the age of fifteen or sixteen.

In "Masamune the One-Eyed Dragon", currently running on NHK, Masamune married the eleven-year-old Megohime at the age of thirteen. Masamune's oldest daughter, Irohahime, was engaged to Tokugawa Ieyasu's sixth son Tadateru at the age of six, and married him at the age of thirteen, when Tadateru was fifteen. Furthermore, Nobunaga married Nohime (age 18) at the age of fifteen, and Ieyasu married Senahime (age 22) at the age of sixteen.

あなたは，このコミック武田信玄を読んで，どんな感想をお持ちになりましたか。

お読みになった感想やご意見をおよせくだされば幸いです。〒162 東京都新宿区新小川町9-25 日商ビル5F
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CHAPTER 26